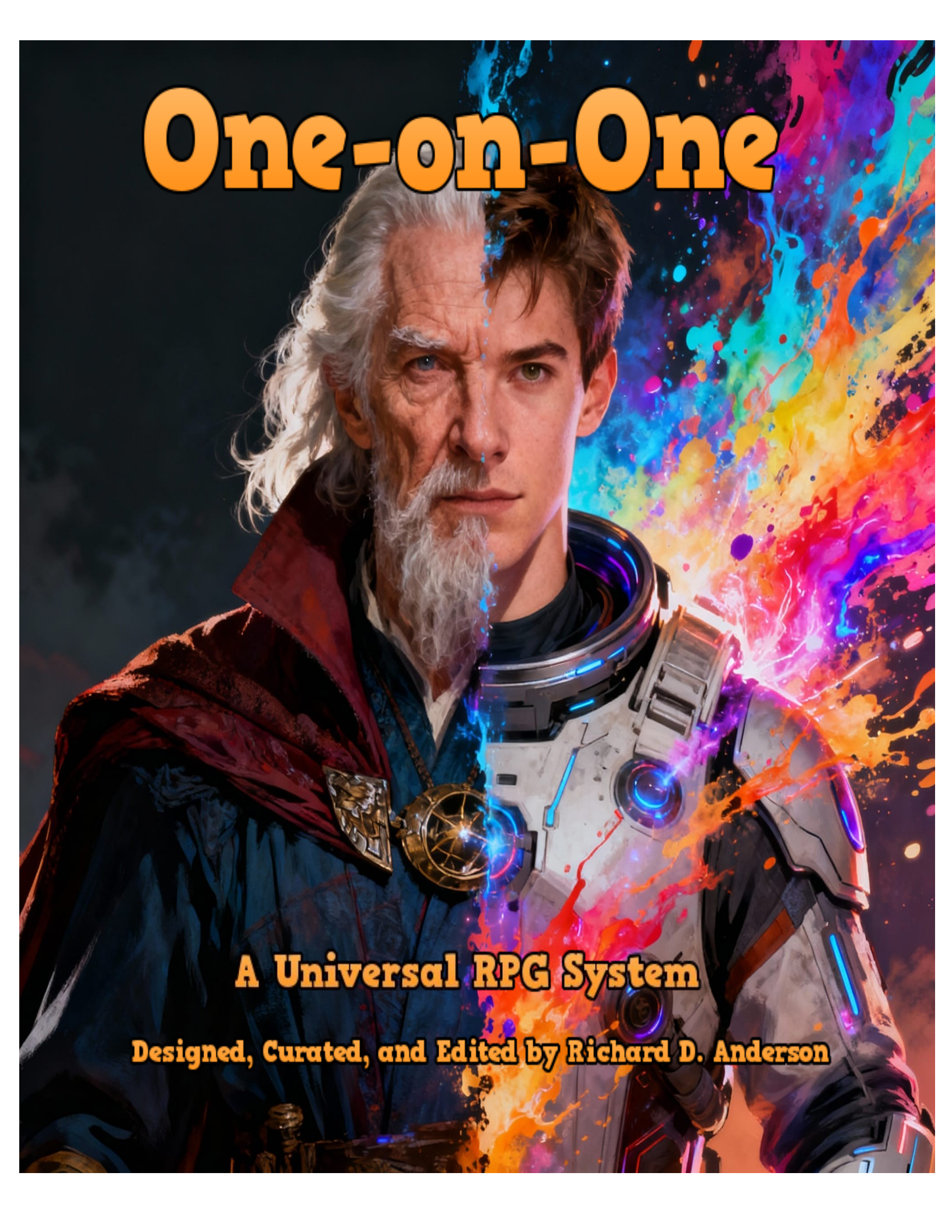


One-on-One

The background of the cover features a character whose face is split vertically down the middle. The left side of the face is that of an elderly man with long, wavy white hair and a full white beard, wearing a dark blue robe with a red-lined collar and a gold medallion. The right side of the face is that of a younger man with short brown hair and green eyes, wearing a white and grey futuristic suit with blue glowing accents. To the right of the character's head is a large, vibrant explosion of colorful paint splatters in shades of blue, cyan, yellow, orange, and red, set against a dark, starry space background.

A Universal RPG System

Designed, Curated, and Edited by Richard D. Anderson

One-on-One RPG System

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One-on-One RPG System

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BOOK 0 — CORE BOOK (FOUNDATION LIBRARY)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **One-on-One**—a universal role-playing game system built for a very specific kind of table: **one Director and one Protagonist**.

Most tabletop RPGs assume a party. One-on-One assumes a duo story: a single main character facing the world head-on, supported by a single **Companion** who is always part of the genre and always part of play. That design choice changes everything—in a good way. It sharpens focus, speeds decision-making, and turns every scene into a meaningful turning point because there's no crowd to hide in.

One-on-One is also built to travel. You can run it as medieval fantasy, modern thriller, futuristic sci-fi, or a hybrid of all three. You can mix genre modules without rebuilding the rules from scratch. If a setting introduces magic, psionics, cybernetics, starships, or powered armor, those things attach to the same core resolution engine. A sword swing and a plasma burst may look different in the fiction, but they resolve through the same mechanics.

What One-on-One Promises

This core book exists to hold the system's promises steady no matter what genre you play.

1) One Director, one Protagonist, one Companion.

The Director runs the world, supporting cast, threats, and consequences. The Protagonist is the single player character, the center of the story. The Companion is a constant pillar—never optional, never an afterthought—whether they are a squire, a handler, a familiar, a partner, a pet, a drone, or something stranger.

2) Percentile clarity.

One-on-One is primarily a **d100 (d%)** system: attributes, skills, contests, and combat all hinge on

clean percentile rolls. If you have 62%, you succeed on 62 or less. The math stays light. The stakes stay visible.

3) Situations are expressed through a simple ladder.

The game uses **Advantages and Disadvantages** as a clean modifier ladder: **±10 / ±20 / ±30**. This is the system's universal language for conditions, pressure, positioning, tools, and circumstances. It is as useful for social negotiation as it is for combat cover.

4) Quality matters only when it matters.

One-on-One uses **Degree of Success (DoS)** and **Degree of Failure (DoF)** when the quality of a result changes what happens next—especially in contests and combat. When quality doesn't matter, you don't compute it.

5) Mutual failure still advances the scene.

When both sides fail a contest, the story does not stall. The side with the “least bad” failure gains a **Lesser Win**—a reduced effect that still pushes the narrative forward, usually with a complication.

6) Destiny is the Protagonist's lever.

The Protagonist has **Destiny Points**, a limited resource that starts small and can be improved through growth. Destiny Points can be spent to grant **+10** per point to the Protagonist's d100 roll, and/or impose **−10** per point to an opponent's roll—stackable, and both can be used at once. Destiny doesn't replace skill; it decides which moments the story bends around.

7) Wounds are universal and tiered.

Harm is expressed in four wound tiers—**Light, Medium, Severe, Critical**—and it works the same way across genres. Damage dice from weapons convert into these tiers, and wounds stack formally, escalating when repeated harm compounds.

8) The system uses all dice types—but keeps the core engine stable.

One-on-One can use **d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, and d100**. Damage, random tables, certain genre mechanics, and special effects can draw on any

die size. But the heart of the game remains stable: the **d100 test**.

What This Book Is For

Book 0 is the foundation library. It is the “why” and the “what stays true” behind One-on-One. It defines the roles at the table, explains what role-playing games are for readers who are new, and lays out the core resolution structure that every genre module plugs into.

Book 0 also provides three universal content libraries split by genre baseline:

- **Equipment** (Medieval/Fantasy, Modern, Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)
- **Vehicles** (same divisions)
- **Bestiary** (same divisions)

These lists are not meant to lock you into a single setting. They are meant to give the Director immediate tools to build scenes, threats, and rewards no matter what genre is in play.

What Book I Is For

If Book 0 is the foundation library, **Book I** is the playable starter engine.

Book I is where you sit down and run a full game immediately: character creation, the core resolution loop in play-facing language, combat and defense, wounds and recovery, the Companion system, growth and downtime, pacing Clocks, and universal chase rules.

Book 0 teaches and supports. Book I runs.

Genre Skill Sets and Compatibility

One-on-One uses multiple genre skill lists:

- Medieval/Fantasy
- Modern

- Futuristic

Each list is complete enough to run its genre cleanly, but each list is also built to work alongside any other list without rewriting the system. A character can learn a futuristic piloting skill while traveling through a medieval world. A modern firearms specialist can exist in a fantasy campaign—if the fiction supports access to the gear and training.

Two principles keep genre mixing stable:

1. **Power scale is one-for-one** by default.
A hit is a hit; the wound tiers remain the same.
2. **Mixing does not erase training.**
Specialist skills and specialist gear still require access and competence.

Modules may introduce exceptions, but they do so knowingly and explicitly.

The One-on-One Play Experience

Because One-on-One is a duo system, the rhythm is different from party play.

- Scenes tend to be sharper and shorter.
- Consequences land harder.
- Relationships matter more because there is no party banter to dilute emotion.
- Combat must be fair without being forgiving; the Companion and pacing tools help do that.
- Every decision the Protagonist makes is visible to the story.

If you want a game that feels like a tight novel, a focused film, a character-driven thriller, a two-person anime arc, or a dueling myth—One-on-One is built to carry that.

CHAPTER 1: ROLES AT THE TABLE

One-on-One is built around a fixed triangle:

- **The Director** runs the world.
- **The Protagonist** plays the main character.
- **The Companion** is always present in the genre and participates directly in play.

Everything else—the rules, the dice, the skills, the gear lists, the bestiary—exists to serve that triangle. If you keep these roles clear, the game runs cleanly. If the roles blur, One-on-One play can become lopsided: too harsh, too easy, too slow, or oddly “self-playing.”

This chapter defines what each role is responsible for, what each role should avoid, and how the table stays fair when there is only one player character.

1.1 The Director

The Director is the game’s author of reality. They frame scenes, portray all supporting characters, set consequences, run Antagonists, manage pacing, and decide when the dice matter.

In traditional party RPGs, the Director can lean on the group to generate momentum and solve problems through teamwork. In One-on-One, the Director must provide that structure deliberately—without taking away the Protagonist’s agency. Your job is not to “win.” Your job is to **present a living world**, apply pressure honestly, and let the Protagonist’s choices matter.

The Director’s Responsibilities

A) Frame scenes with clear stakes

Before dice hit the table, the Director clarifies:

- What the Protagonist is trying to do
- What happens on success

- What happens on failure (or partial outcome, if appropriate)
- Whether the roll is a Test or a Contest
- What time pressure exists (often expressed through Clocks)

If the Protagonist cannot lose anything meaningful, you usually don’t need a roll.

B) Portray the world and everyone in it

The Director plays:

- Antagonists (those who oppose the Protagonist)
- Supporting characters (those who help, hinder, tempt, or complicate)
- The Companion (portrayed by the Director, directed in intent by the Protagonist in danger scenes)
- The environment (terrain, weather, hazards, alarms, crowds, systems)

The Director makes sure the world reacts. Consequences should be logical. If the Protagonist fires a gun in a quiet building, the world hears it. If they betray a contact, that contact remembers.

C) Call for rolls only when needed

One-on-One is a d100 system. That does not mean it is a “roll for everything” system. If rolling is constant, One-on-One play becomes exhausting and slow.

Call for a roll when:

- The outcome is uncertain
- The outcome matters
- Both success and failure change the scene

When the outcome is certain or irrelevant, keep the story moving.

D) Apply Advantages/Disadvantages honestly

The system’s circumstance language is clean: **±10 / ±20 / ±30**.

The Director is responsible for translating the fiction into that ladder:

- Cover
- Lighting
- leverage
- preparation
- injuries
- tools
- crowd density
- interference
- timing

The Director should keep modifiers readable. When in doubt, choose one clear modifier rather than a pile of tiny ones.

E) Respect Destiny as the Protagonist's lever

Destiny Points belong to the Protagonist. They are a limited resource that can be spent to add **+10** per point to the Protagonist's roll and/or impose **-10** per point to an opponent's roll—stackable, and both can be used at once.

The Director's job is to:

- Make Destiny worth spending by setting real stakes
- Allow Destiny to matter when it is spent
- Keep refresh and growth consistent with the campaign's chosen rhythm (as defined in the advancement rules)

Destiny is not "cheating." It is a declared rule tool for emphasizing turning points.

F) Use mutual failure to keep scenes moving

One-on-One does not stall on double-failure contests. If both parties fail, the "least bad" result (lower Degree of Failure) earns a **Lesser Win**—reduced effect, but forward motion, usually with a complication.

The Director should treat the Lesser Win as an engine:

- The door opens, but a Clock starts.

- The opponent loses ground, but not decisively.
- The Protagonist escapes, but drops something valuable.
- The shot hits, but only grazes.

The story moves; the cost appears.

G) Keep One-on-One danger fair

With one Protagonist, the risk of unfair overwhelm is real. Fair doesn't mean safe. It means readable, telegraphed, and survivable through smart play, Companion support, and Destiny use.

The Director should:

- Telegraph severe threats
- Use Clocks to represent pressure (reinforcements, bleeding out, suspicion)
- Use outnumbering rules and threat grouping intentionally
- Let the Companion matter without letting the Companion solve the game

Director Tips (Table Habits That Help):

- **Say the stakes out loud.**
In One-on-One play, the player cannot check with other players for "what we think will happen." Speak the stakes plainly.
- **Let failure be productive.**
Failures should not be dead ends. They should be costs, complications, detours, or escalations.
- **Make the world respond.**
Consequences are the game's gravity. If the world doesn't respond, choices feel weightless.

Common Misuses (Director):

- **Using the Companion to solve the plot.**
The Companion can notice, worry, assist, screen, anchor, and suggest. They should rarely deliver the right answer. The Protagonist remains the decision engine.

- **Over-rolling.**
One roll should resolve an action that matters. Avoid chains of micro-rolls that only slow the story.

1.2 The Protagonist

The Protagonist is the single player character—the main character of the story. In One-on-One, the Protagonist’s choices carry the entire campaign. That is not a burden; it is a gift. It means the story follows your decisions closely, and the game’s pressure is aimed at you with precision.

The Protagonist’s Responsibilities

A) Declare intent clearly

The Protagonist is responsible for telling the Director:

- what you are trying to do
- how you are doing it (your approach)
- what you are willing to risk
- what you want the scene to become

Clear intent helps the Director set correct stakes and choose the right resolution method (Test vs Contest).

B) Play toward hooks, goals, and lines

One-on-One thrives when the Protagonist has:

- a goal (what you want)
- a line (what you will not do)
- hooks (debts, dangers, mysteries)

These are not “background flavor.” They are navigation tools. When you feel stuck, point at one of them and act.

C) Use the system tools with purpose

One-on-One gives the Protagonist three major survival and momentum tools:

1. **Advantages/Disadvantages** (the ladder): seek +10/+20/+30 through good plans; avoid –10/–20/–30 through caution and positioning.
2. **Destiny Points**: spend them when the stakes matter most; they stack; you can boost yourself and hinder an opponent in the same contest.
3. **The Companion**: use Assist, Screen, and Anchor to prevent One-on-One overwhelm.

The Protagonist is expected to use these tools. The game is tuned with them in mind.

D) Accept consequences

In One-on-One play, avoiding consequences entirely can collapse the story. Consequences are not punishment; they are the engine that changes the world.

When you fail, lean into it:

- pay the cost
- take the complication
- choose the hard option
- protect what matters

This is how duo stories become memorable.

Protagonist Tips (Table Habits That Help):

- **Choose approaches, not just actions.**
“I attack” is an action. “I attack from cover after aiming” is an approach. Approaches earn Advantages.
- **Spend Destiny when your values are on the line.**
Destiny is strongest when it protects what you care about—your goal, your Companion, your vow, your survival.
- **Let the Companion matter.**
Use them actively: ask their opinion, direct

their intent, rely on their support actions when pressure rises.

Common Misuses (Protagonist):

- **Playing like you have a party.**
You don't. You have a Companion, not four other PCs. Pick fights intentionally. Use stealth, leverage, negotiation, and retreat when appropriate.
- **Hoarding Destiny forever.**
Destiny is meant to be spent. If you never spend it, the game becomes harsher and less cinematic than intended.

1.3 The Companion

Every One-on-One story includes a Companion, and every Companion exists in two layers:

- **Fiction layer:** who they are, what they want, what they fear, what they mean to the Protagonist.
- **System layer:** how they support play through universal actions and limited direct rolls.

The Companion is not optional. They are a structural part of the game: relationship texture, fairness tool, pacing tool, and living stake.

The Companion's Responsibilities (System Layer)

The Companion supports play through three universal actions that function the same way in every genre:

- **Assist:** grant the Protagonist +10 on one roll when meaningful help is provided.
- **Screen:** reduce the Protagonist's outnumbered pressure by one step.
- **Anchor:** slow a relevant Clock by 1 or prevent a Clock from advancing once (as fits the fiction).

These are not "extra rules." They are the Companion's core interface with the system.

The Companion's Responsibilities (Fiction Layer)

A good Companion:

- has an opinion
- has a fear
- has a bond with the Protagonist
- complicates choices sometimes
- does not replace the Protagonist's agency

The Companion can disagree, worry, plead, or even challenge the Protagonist. That tension is healthy. It is part of what makes duo stories feel alive.

Who Controls the Companion?

One-on-One uses a practical contract:

- **The Director portrays** the Companion's personality, voice, and reactions.
- **The Protagonist directs intent** in danger scenes ("Help me," "Cover the door," "Stay back," "Hold the line," "Keep watch").

This keeps the Companion from becoming a second character sheet the player must manage, while also preventing the Director from "playing against themselves" by controlling both the opposition and the Protagonist's main ally.

Director Tip: Treat Companion intent like a command you interpret, not an order you weaponize.

If the Protagonist says "stay safe," don't force the Companion into danger unless the fiction truly demands it—and telegraph that demand.

1.4 Antagonists and Supporting Characters

One-on-One uses the same world roles found in other RPGs, but they are shaped by the duo structure.

Antagonists

An Antagonist is not simply an enemy. An Antagonist is any force actively opposing the Protagonist's goals:

- a villain
- a rival
- a system (law, bureaucracy, curse, faction)
- a monster
- a Clocked threat (reinforcements, suspicion, collapse)

Antagonists drive momentum because they create pressure and demand choices.

In One-on-One play, Antagonists should be:

- clear in motive
- readable in threat
- capable of escalation without instant unfairness

Supporting Characters (NPCs)

Supporting characters exist to:

- provide information
- offer aid at a cost
- complicate choices
- reflect the Protagonist's values
- embody consequences

They are also how the Director keeps the world feeling populated without turning the game into a dialogue marathon. Keep them sharp: one desire, one fear, one lever.

1.5 Table Agreements, Stakes, and Tone

Because One-on-One is intimate, the table should establish tone and boundaries clearly.

Tone

Agree on the campaign's tone:

- cinematic
- grounded
- gritty
- horror
- heroic
- tragic

Tone affects how you interpret consequences, recovery pacing, and how often the story invites "big moments."

Stakes

One-on-One thrives when stakes are explicit:

- What happens if you fail?
- What changes in the world?
- Who pays the price?

The Director should say stakes out loud, and the Protagonist should respond honestly—either accepting them or choosing a different approach.

Safety and Comfort

Because the story centers closely on one character and one Companion, emotional material can land hard. Agree on any lines, limits, or fade-to-black boundaries the table wants. This is not a mechanics change; it's a table clarity tool.

1.6 A Short Example of Role Clarity

The Protagonist: "I want to sneak past the guards and reach the archive door."

The Director: "If you succeed, you get to the door unseen. If you fail, the guards spot movement and start a Clock."

The Protagonist: "My Companion screens the hallway—creates a distraction."

The Director: "Great. That's Assist. Take +10."

The Protagonist: “And if this goes bad, I’m spending Destiny.”

In that short exchange:

- The Director framed stakes.
- The Protagonist declared intent and approach.

- The Companion acted through a universal support tool.
- The game stayed fast, fair, and focused.

That is the heart of One-on-One.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

A New Player Guide to One-on-One and Tabletop RPGs

If you've never played a tabletop role-playing game before, you are not behind. You are exactly where this chapter expects you to be.

A role-playing game (RPG) is a shared story you **play**, not a story you simply read or watch. One person describes a world and its problems. Another person makes choices as a character inside that world. Dice are used when the outcome is uncertain and the stakes matter.

That's it. Everything else—maps, minis, character sheets, spells, guns, starships, dragons—is just a way to make those choices feel real.

One-on-One is a tabletop RPG designed for **two people** at the table:

- **The Director** (the game master)
- **The Protagonist** (the single player character)

And it always includes a third pillar in the fiction:

- **The Companion** (an ever-present supporting character who participates directly in play)

This chapter explains what RPGs are, how they work at the table, what the dice do, and why One-on-One plays differently than group-based games.

2.1 The Core Idea: A Conversation With Consequences

An RPG is a structured conversation.

- The Director describes what is happening in the world.
- The Protagonist describes what they try to do.

- The Director describes what happens next.
- Sometimes, when the outcome is uncertain and meaningful, dice decide the result.

That cycle repeats, and the story emerges naturally from choices.

A useful way to remember this is a simple three-part rhythm:

Declare → Resolve → Consequence

1. **Declare:** The Protagonist states an intent and an approach.
2. **Resolve:** The Director decides if a roll is needed, and if so what is rolled.
3. **Consequence:** The Director applies the outcome honestly and the scene changes.

In One-on-One, that rhythm is the foundation of the entire system.

Director Tip: If a scene feels stuck, return to the rhythm. Ask: "What are you trying to do?" Then set stakes. Then resolve.

2.2 What the Protagonist Actually Does

In most RPGs, the player controls a character. In One-on-One, the player controls **the** character.

Your job as the Protagonist is not to recite lines or "perform." You can, if you enjoy it, but it is not required. Your core job is to make decisions for your character—especially when those decisions are difficult.

You will do things like:

- Investigate mysteries
- Talk your way into places you shouldn't be
- Sneak past threats

- Fight, flee, or bargain when danger arrives
- Make plans
- Take risks
- Protect the Companion
- Choose what matters more: success, safety, loyalty, or truth

The character sheet exists to support those decisions, not replace them. The sheet answers questions like:

- “How good am I at this?”
- “What tools do I have?”
- “What does my injury do to me?”
- “How can I push fate when it matters?”

2.3 What the Director Actually Does

The Director runs everything that is not the Protagonist.

The Director:

- Describes scenes and environments
- Plays all supporting characters and Antagonists
- Presents problems, dangers, and opportunities
- Sets stakes and consequences
- Calls for rolls when needed
- Applies rules consistently and honestly

The Director is not competing against the Protagonist. The Director is building a world that reacts and testing what the Protagonist will do inside it.

In One-on-One, Directors have a special burden: there is only one player character. If the Director makes scenes unfair, there is no party to rescue the Protagonist. If the Director makes scenes too easy, the game becomes flat. The Director’s job is to keep pressure real and readable.

2.4 What Makes One-on-One Different From Party RPGs

Most RPGs assume a group of player characters. Those games rely on:

- teamwork
- role coverage (someone is good at combat, someone at social, someone at stealth)
- shared risk
- group planning and debate

One-on-One is different. It is sharper and more intimate. Every decision is closer to the center of the story.

This has practical effects:

A) The story moves faster

With one player character, decisions do not require votes, debate, or group consensus. Scenes cut quickly to the point.

B) Stakes land harder

In a group, one character can fail and another can compensate. In One-on-One, failure changes the whole situation.

C) The Companion becomes essential

The Companion exists to:

- add conversation texture
- stabilize fairness in dangerous scenes
- provide emotional stakes
- enable duo-style narratives where relationship matters

D) The Director must be clear about consequences

In group play, players often learn stakes through discussion. In One-on-One, the Director should speak stakes plainly.

2.5 What Dice Are For

Dice exist to keep the story honest.

If you could simply decide every outcome, the game would become either:

- pure improvisational storytelling (which can be fun but is different), or
- a game where one person's preference dominates

Dice introduce impartial uncertainty. They make risk feel real.

In One-on-One, dice are rolled when all three are true:

1. the outcome is uncertain
2. the outcome matters
3. both success and failure change the scene

If one of those is missing, the Director can usually resolve the action without dice.

Example: If you have time, tools, and no pressure, you can probably climb a fence without rolling. If you must climb it while being chased, the roll matters.

2.6 Polyhedral Dice: What They Are and How to Read Them

Tabletop RPGs use “polyhedral dice,” meaning dice with different numbers of sides. You may see them written like this:

- **d4** = four-sided die
- **d6** = six-sided die
- **d8** = eight-sided die

- **d10** = ten-sided die
- **d12** = twelve-sided die
- **d20** = twenty-sided die
- **d100** = one hundred-sided result (often rolled as percentile dice)

Percentile Dice (d100 / d%)

One-on-One is primarily a **percentile** system.

A percentile roll produces a number from **1 to 100**. Most people roll this as:

- two ten-sided dice (two d10s), where one die is the “tens” and the other is the “ones,” or
- a digital roller

Example: If you roll a 3 on the tens die and a 7 on the ones die, that is 37.

In One-on-One:

- If your skill is **62%**, you succeed on **62 or less**.
- If you roll **63 or higher**, you fail.

This is easy to read: higher skill means a wider success range.

Important: Some tables treat “00” as 100. Keep your table consistent.

Other Dice in One-on-One

One-on-One uses all dice types, but in different roles:

- **d100** drives core actions: skills, attributes, contests, combat rolls.
- **Other dice** often appear in damage, random tables, special effects, genre modules, and equipment.

This keeps the core system stable while still letting different genres feel different.

2.7 The Character Sheet: A Map of Capability

Your character sheet contains:

- Attributes (percentages)
- Skills (percentages)
- Wounds (tiered injuries)
- Gear and tools
- Destiny Points (your ability to push fate)
- Companion information (in a separate block or page)

You do not need to memorize your sheet. The sheet is a reference tool. When you attempt something risky, you look at the sheet and pick the most relevant skill or attribute.

Director Tip: If a player is unsure what to roll, ask what they are doing and how. Then choose the roll from the fiction.

2.8 What It Means to “Make a Check”

When you try something difficult or risky, the Director may call for a roll.

In One-on-One, most rolls are **d100 tests**.

A) Skill Tests

If you have a relevant skill, roll against that skill.

Example:

You try to pick a lock. The Director calls for a Lockpicking test. You roll d100. If you roll equal to or below your Lockpicking %, you succeed.

B) Attribute Tests

If you do not have a relevant skill—or the action is raw capability—the Director may call for an attribute roll.

Example:

You try to force open a stuck door. The Director calls for a Might test.

C) Modifiers: Advantages and Disadvantages

The Director applies circumstances using the ladder:

- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** –10 / –20 / –30

This modifies your % before you roll.

Example:

You are picking a lock in total darkness while someone pounds on the door. That might be –20. If you have proper tools and time, it might be +10 instead.

The ladder is the game’s “circumstance language.” It keeps play fast and consistent.

2.9 The Two Main Roll Types: Tests and Contests

Most RPG actions fall into one of two categories:

A) A Test: You vs the World

A test happens when the world is the challenge: climbing a wall, searching a room, decoding a message, treating a wound, sneaking past a passive guard.

You roll once. The Director resolves the outcome.

B) A Contest: You vs Someone Who Resists

A contest happens when an active opponent resists you: a fight, a chase, a lie vs an interrogator, a grapple, a hacking duel, a negotiation where both sides push.

In a contest:

- Both sides roll d100 against their relevant skill or attribute (after modifiers).
- Outcomes are compared.

One-on-One uses a clean contest rule:

- **Success beats failure.**

- If both succeed, the higher **Degree of Success (DoS)** wins.
- If both fail, the lower **Degree of Failure (DoF)** wins a **Lesser Win**.

That “both fail” rule is important. It keeps scenes moving.

2.10 Success, Failure, and “Lesser Wins”

RPGs are not pass/fail quizzes. They are decision engines.

A success should change the situation in the Protagonist’s favor.

A failure should also change the situation—just not the way the Protagonist wanted.

In One-on-One, contests have a special rule that prevents “dead air”:

Mutual Failure (Both Sides Fail) → Lesser Win

If both parties fail a contest, the side with the “least bad” failure (lower DoF) gains a **Lesser Win**.

A Lesser Win means:

- You technically achieve something, but
- the effect is reduced, messy, incomplete, or costly.

This ensures:

- the story advances,
- tension stays alive,
- and failure still matters.

Example:

You and an enemy both scramble for the dropped key in the mud. You both fail your rolls. You failed less badly. You grab the key—but you slip, fall, and the enemy is now close enough to strike.

The Lesser Win is not “free success.” It is forward motion at a cost.

2.11 Destiny Points: When the Story Bends

One-on-One includes Destiny Points because One-on-One play needs a controlled way to create cinematic turning points without erasing danger.

Destiny Points:

- start at a low base
- can be increased with growth
- are spent to modify d100 rolls in meaningful moments

A Destiny Point can be spent to:

- grant **+10** to the Protagonist’s roll (per point), and/or
- impose **–10** to an opponent’s roll (per point)

They stack, and both can be used at once in the same contest.

Destiny is a declaration:

“This matters enough that I will pay to bend fate.”

In play, Destiny is often used to:

- survive a lethal moment
- land the decisive strike
- protect the Companion
- succeed at the crucial lie
- escape when capture would change everything

2.12 What “Winning” Means in an RPG

RPGs are not usually “win or lose” games in the way board games are. The goal is not to defeat the Director. The goal is to experience a story that feels earned.

You “win” an RPG session when:

- your choices mattered,

- consequences were real,
- the story moved,
- and you are eager to see what happens next.

One-on-One is especially strong at this because it is focused. The Director can tailor scenes directly to the Protagonist's hooks, values, and fears. Every moment can be personal.

2.13 A Short Example Scene (What Play Looks Like)

Director: "The archive door is locked. You hear footsteps in the stairwell. If you fail this lock attempt, the guard reaches the landing and sees you."

Protagonist: "I kneel and pick it fast."

Director: "Lockpicking test. It's rushed—Disadvantage –10."

Protagonist: "My Companion keeps watch and whispers timing. Assist gives me +10, so it cancels out."

Director: "Correct. Roll."

Protagonist: "I'm spending one Destiny for +10."

Director: "Done. Roll d100."

One sentence set the stakes. The Protagonist made a choice. The Companion mattered. Destiny mattered. The dice decided. The scene changed.

That is role-playing.

2.14 What to Read Next

If you are new to RPGs, the next chapter to read is:

- **Book 0, Chapter 3: The Core Resolution Loop**

If you want to play as soon as possible, you can also jump directly to:

- **Book I: Starter Rules**, which contains the full playable procedures, character creation, combat loop, wounds, companion rules, and advancement.

Book 0 teaches the foundation. Book I runs the game.

CHAPTER 3: THE CORE RESOLUTION LOOP

One-on-One is powered by a single engine: **the d100 resolution loop**. Everything—skills, attributes, contests, combat, chases, investigations, social pressure, hazards, even genre-mixed scenes—feeds into the same loop so the table never has to “switch games” when the setting changes.

This chapter teaches that loop in full, explains when to roll and when not to roll, defines the difference between **Tests** and **Contests**, and formalizes how **Advantages/Disadvantages**, **Degree of Success/Failure**, **mutual failure**, **Lesser Wins**, and **Destiny Points** integrate into play without slowing it down.

3.1 The Loop in One Sentence

The Director frames a situation with stakes, the Protagonist declares intent and approach, the table resolves with a roll only if needed, and the Director applies consequences that change the scene.

That is the whole game.

If you remember nothing else, remember this: **roll only when it matters, and always let the result move the story.**

3.2 The Loop in Six Steps

Use this six-step loop as your default procedure:

Step 1 — Frame the Scene (Director)

The Director describes what is happening right now—where you are, what’s present, what’s changed since last time—and offers the Protagonist something to react to: a threat, an opportunity, a mystery, a choice.

Good framing answers at least two questions:

- **What’s the immediate situation?**

- **Why does it matter right now?**

Director Tip: In One-on-One, short framing is best. One strong image, one pressure, one decision.

Step 2 — Declare Intent (Protagonist)

The Protagonist states what they want to accomplish.

Intent should be clear enough that everyone can tell what success looks like.

Examples:

- “I want to get through the door before the guard turns the corner.”
- “I want to convince her to give me the passcode.”
- “I want to shoot the bandit’s weapon hand.”
- “I want to outrun the drone before it locks on.”

Step 3 — Choose an Approach (Protagonist)

The Protagonist describes how they are doing it—tools, positioning, method, attitude, risk tolerance.

Approach is where tactics live and where most **Advantages/Disadvantages** come from.

Examples:

- “I stay low, move between crates, and time the patrol’s footsteps.”
 - “I tell the truth, but I omit the detail that would turn her hostile.”
 - “I take careful aim from cover.”
 - “I slam the throttle and weave through the market to break line of sight.”
-

Step 4 — Set Stakes and Method (Director)

The Director does three things:

1. **Decides if a roll is needed.**
2. **Chooses the method:** Test or Contest.
3. **States the stakes:** what happens on success and on failure.

When you *do* roll

Roll when all three are true:

- The outcome is uncertain
- The outcome matters
- Both success and failure change the scene

When you *don't* roll

Don't roll when:

- success is automatic due to time/tools/safety
- failure would not meaningfully change anything
- the roll would only gate progress without adding interest

Common Misuse: “Roll to look around the room.” Better: “What are you looking for, and how?” Then roll only if something meaningful is on the line.

Step 5 — Apply Modifiers and Spend Destiny

Before any d100 roll is made, the table applies the system's universal modifiers:

Advantages and Disadvantages (± 10 / ± 20 / ± 30)

The Director assigns a single clean modifier (or a short stack if absolutely necessary) based on conditions.

- **Advantage:** +10, +20, or +30

- **Disadvantage:** -10, -20, or -30

These adjust the Protagonist's (or opponent's) effective target number for that roll.

Destiny Points (Protagonist)

Destiny Points are declared **before** the roll is resolved.

A Destiny Point can be spent to:

- grant +10 to the Protagonist's d100 roll (per point), and/or
- impose -10 to an opponent's d100 roll (per point)

They **stack**, and the Protagonist may do both at once.

Director Tip: Destiny is the Protagonist's lever. Make it matter by setting real stakes, then let the spend stand.

Step 6 — Roll, Compare, Apply Consequences (Director)

Roll the d100, determine success/failure, determine Degree of Success/Failure if needed, then apply the outcome as a consequence that changes the scene.

This is where the game lives. The Director must land the outcome cleanly and keep momentum.

3.3 Tests vs Contests

One-on-One uses two core resolution modes.

A) A Test (You vs the Situation)

A **Test** is used when the world is the challenge.

Examples:

- climbing a wall
- researching a book
- picking a lock
- tracking footprints

- treating a wound
- piloting through a storm (if no one is actively opposing you)

Procedure:

Roll d100 against the relevant **skill** (preferred) or **attribute** (if no skill fits). Apply Advantages/Disadvantages. Success means you achieve your intent. Failure means you do not—and the stakes occur.

Director Tip: A Test should resolve an action that matters, not a series of tiny steps.

B) A Contest (You vs an Active Opponent)

A **Contest** is used when someone (or something) is directly resisting you.

Examples:

- fighting (attack vs defense)
- grappling
- sneaking past an alert guard
- persuading someone who doesn't want to be persuaded
- racing another vehicle
- hacking against an active defender

Procedure:

Both sides roll d100 against their relevant skill/attribute after modifiers. Compare outcomes:

1. **Success beats failure.**
2. If **both succeed**, the winner is the one with the better **Degree of Success (DoS)**.
3. If **both fail**, the winner is the one with the better (lower) **Degree of Failure (DoF)**—and that winner gains a **Lesser Win**.

This last rule is crucial: contests don't stall.

3.4 Degree of Success and Degree of Failure

Most of the time, success/failure is enough. But when quality matters—especially in contests and combat—One-on-One uses Degree.

- **Degree of Success (DoS):** how well you succeeded
- **Degree of Failure (DoF):** how badly you failed

Determining DoS and DoF:

DoS = Target – Roll (*only if you succeeded*)

DoF = Roll – Target (*only if you failed*)

A higher DoS means a cleaner, faster, quieter, more effective success. A lower DoF means you “missed by less” — and in contests, that matters for **Lesser Wins**.

Degree is used to:

- determine a contest winner when both succeed
- determine “least bad” in mutual failure
- translate combat outcomes into damage/wound tiers
- judge speed, completeness, or side effects

Director Tip: Only compute Degree when it changes what happens next.

3.5 Mutual Failure and the Lesser Win

In many games, mutual failure creates a dead moment: “Nothing happens.” One-on-One does not allow that result in contests.

If both parties fail a contest:

- The side with the **least bad failure** wins (lower DoF)
- That winner gains a **Lesser Win**

A **Lesser Win** is a reduced effect that still moves the story forward, usually with a complication or cost.

Common forms of Lesser Win:

- you get it, but slowly
- you get it, but messy
- you get part of it
- you get it, but expose yourself
- you succeed, but something breaks
- you win the moment, but lose position

Director Tip: A Lesser Win should feel like “you scraped it,” not “you dominated.”

3.6 The Director’s Stakes Rule

Before any meaningful roll, the Director should state stakes plainly:

- **On success:** what changes?
- **On failure:** what changes?

This is not a negotiation. It is clarity.

If the Protagonist hears the stakes and chooses to proceed anyway, the roll feels fair—especially in One-on-One play where consequences land harder.

Common Misuse: Hidden stakes.

If the Protagonist thinks failure means “you don’t open the door,” but you secretly mean “the door explodes and you’re captured,” the game becomes distrustful. Keep stakes readable.

3.7 The “One Roll = One Meaningful Outcome” Rule

One-on-One is designed to be fast. The Director should avoid “roll to roll” sequences.

When possible:

- use one roll to resolve an entire meaningful attempt

- use Degree to decide how far it goes
- move into a new scene state immediately

Example: “I search the office for the ledger.”

One roll can resolve:

- whether you find it,
- whether you find it in time,
- and whether you leave traces behind.

3.8 A Full Example: Contest + Destiny + Mutual Failure Lesser Win

EXAMPLE: “Least Bad Wins”
(Contest with Destiny Spend)

Scene: A cult enforcer and the Protagonist both lunge for a dropped data drive. Whoever gets it first controls the evidence.

Director (stakes): “If you win, you get the drive and can run. If you lose, he gets it and calls reinforcements. This is a **Contest**: your **Athletics** vs his **Athletics**.”

Director (modifiers): “The floor is slick with rainwater—**Disadvantage** –10 for both of you.”

Protagonist: “I’m spending 1 **Destiny Point** to give myself +10. And I’ll spend 1 **Destiny Point** to give him –10.”

Director: “Noted. Apply all modifiers.”

Rolls:

- Protagonist Athletics 55%.
With –10 (slick) +10
(Destiny) = 55% effective.
Rolls 68 → **failure**.
- Enforcer Athletics 60%.
With –10 (slick) –10

(Destiny) = 40% effective.
Rolls 44 → **failure**.

Director: “Both failed. Compare **Degree of Failure**. You failed by 13 (68–55). He failed by 4 (44–40). He’s the least bad.”

Outcome (Lesser Win): “He gets the drive—**but** he slips, crashes into the stair rail, and loses time. You don’t get the evidence, but you do get a clean opening: you can bolt into the alley before he can shout. The Reinforcement Clock ticks—just not as fast as it would have on a clean win.”

This example shows three system truths:

- Destiny can swing the math without guaranteeing victory.
- Mutual failure still produces forward motion.
- Lesser Wins create costs and complications rather than dead ends.

3.9 Quick Reference: The Core Loop Card

When you want to run an encounter quickly, use this reference:

1. Director frames the scene.
2. Protagonist declares intent.
3. Protagonist states approach.
4. Director chooses Test/Contest and states stakes.
5. Apply $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$; Protagonist may spend Destiny.
6. Roll d100.
7. Resolve: success/failure; Degree if needed.
8. Apply consequences; change the scene state.

3.10 Cross-References

- For the full rules on **Advantages/Disadvantages**, see **Book I: Advantages & Disadvantages**.
- For the full rules on **Destiny Points**, see **Book I: Destiny**.
- For the full rules on **combat contests and wound conversion**, see **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop and Wounds & Stacking**.
- For pacing pressure and Clocks, see **Book I: Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**.

CHAPTER 4: CORE SKILLS (UNIVERSAL SKILL FOUNDATIONS)

One-on-One uses **d100 (d%) skills** as the primary way characters interact with the world. Skills represent training, experience, and practiced competence. They are intentionally written to remain usable across genres—even when the names of things change.

This chapter defines what a skill is, how skills work in play, and provides a **Core Skill**

Foundation list: the skills that are plausibly present in *every* genre and setting. Your fantasy character may call it “Lore” while your modern character calls it “Research,” but the mechanical use is the same: **pick the most fitting skill, apply Advantages/Disadvantages, roll d100, resolve with Degree when it matters.**

Genre modules then add their own specialized skill sets (Medieval/Fantasy, Modern, Futuristic) that plug into this foundation without rewriting the system.

4.1 What a Skill Is (In One-on-One)

A **Skill** is a percentage chance to succeed when you attempt a risky or uncertain action in that field.

- Skills are expressed as **0–100%**, usually ranging from modest competence to elite expertise.
- When the Director calls for a skill test, you roll **d100** and succeed if you roll **equal to or under** your current skill % (after modifiers).

Skills are used for:

- **Tests** (you vs the situation)
- **Contests** (you vs an opponent)
- **Combat and defense** (attack vs defense contests use skills)

- **Special procedures** (chases, downtime actions, crafting, etc.)

Director Tip: Choose the skill based on *approach*, not just outcome. “I intimidate him by calmly listing what I know” is different from “I intimidate him by looming and threatening.”

4.2 Skill Tests: The Universal Procedure

When a skill is used in a **Test**:

1. The Protagonist declares intent and approach.
2. The Director sets stakes (success/failure).
3. Apply **Advantages/Disadvantages**:
 $\pm 10 / \pm 20 / \pm 30$.
4. The Protagonist may spend **Destiny Points** if the stakes justify it.
5. Roll d100.
6. On success, you achieve your intent. On failure, the stated consequence occurs.
7. If quality matters, compute **Degree of Success/Failure**.

Common Misuse: Rolling a skill multiple times for the same task without a meaningful change in circumstance. If nothing changed, the roll already answered the question.

4.3 Skill Contests: The Universal Procedure

When a skill is used in a **Contest**:

1. Both sides identify their skill (or attribute) being used.
2. Apply modifiers: $\pm 10 / \pm 20 / \pm 30$.
3. The Protagonist may spend Destiny to boost their own roll and/or hinder the opponent (–10 per point).

4. Both roll d100.
5. Resolve:
 - Success beats failure
 - If both succeed: compare **DoS**
 - If both fail: compare **DoF** → least bad wins a **Lesser Win**

Director Tip: A contest is for active resistance. If the opponent isn't truly resisting, use a Test.

4.4 Skill Modifiers: Advantage, Disadvantage, and Clean Play

One-on-One uses a simple ladder:

- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** -10 / -20 / -30

These apply to the effective target number.

Apply modifiers for:

- tools, gear, preparation
- time pressure
- environment (darkness, noise, terrain)
- positioning (cover, high ground)
- injury and fatigue (as defined in Wounds/conditions)
- social leverage and context (authority, evidence, fear)

Keep it readable. In a universal system, the temptation is to stack everything. Resist that. Choose the strongest relevant modifier and move forward.

4.5 The Core Skill Foundation List

These skills are intended to be present in every genre. Genre skill sets may rename them, subdivide them, or add specialist variants, but these are the “always usable” building blocks.

Tags: Skills may carry informal tags for quick table sorting. Tags never change mechanics; they help you find the right skill quickly. Example tags include: **[Physical]** **[Social]** **[Technical]** **[Knowledge]** **[Perception]** **[Survival]** **[Combat]**.

If a genre module uses tags and Specialist marks, those marks integrate cleanly with this foundation.

ATHLETICS [Physical]

Running, climbing, swimming, jumping, lifting under pressure, and other full-body exertion. Use Athletics when raw movement and endurance determine the outcome and when failure has consequences (falling, being caught, losing time). In contests it commonly appears in chases, grapples, shoves, and “reach it first” scrambles.

Great With: chase scenes, environmental hazards, escapes.

Common Misuse: Using Athletics to replace every physical skill. If it's fine control (picking a lock, surgery, delicate climbing), use a more precise skill.

ACROBATICS [Physical]

Balance, controlled falls, tumbling, tightrope movement, parkour-style traversal, and escaping restraints through flexibility. Acrobatics is for precision movement and body control, especially where a mistake becomes immediate danger.

Director Tip: Acrobatics often earns Advantage when the environment supports it (rails, ledges, clutter) and Disadvantage when space is tight or slick.

STEALTH [Physical]

Moving unseen, staying quiet, hiding evidence of your presence, and avoiding detection. Use Stealth both for Tests (avoiding passive detection) and

Contests (sneaking past an alert foe). In One-on-One play, Stealth is often paired with Clocks: a failure advances suspicion or alarms instead of ending the scene immediately.

AWARENESS [Perception]

Noticing what's out of place, sensing danger, hearing distant movement, spotting tells, and generally "being hard to surprise." Awareness is the default perception skill when the Protagonist is alert and scanning.

Great With: ambush avoidance, threat reads, trap hints.

INSIGHT [Perception/Social]

Reading people: motives, emotional states, lies, hidden agendas, and pressure points. Insight can be used as a Test (read the room) or as a Contest (lie vs detection). Insight does not grant certainty; it grants direction.

Common Misuse: Treating Insight as mind reading. It gives informed guesses and tells, not perfect truth.

INFLUENCE [Social]

Persuasion, negotiation, diplomacy, bargaining, and shaping someone's choices through reason and incentive. Influence is used when the goal is cooperation, agreement, or favorable compromise.

DECEPTION [Social]

Lying, bluffing, disguising intent, hiding truth through omission, forging a narrative, and maintaining cover stories. Deception is often a Contest against Insight or Awareness depending on context.

INTIMIDATION [Social]

Threats, pressure, dominance displays, coercion, and forcing hesitation through fear. Intimidation can win short-term compliance but often creates lasting consequences—resentment, retaliation, or escalation.

Director Tip: Intimidation commonly produces a "yes, but" success even on strong outcomes. Fear is unstable.

EMPATHY [Social]

Comforting, calming, de-escalating, supporting, and connecting emotionally. Empathy is not "being nice"; it is the skill of stabilizing people and situations. In One-on-One play, Empathy is also how the Protagonist protects the Companion's emotional safety and strengthens bonds.

COMMAND [Social]

Giving orders, leading under pressure, coordinating allies, and directing the Companion effectively in chaos. Command is used to impose clarity, keep discipline, and shape group action—especially useful when the Director runs multiple NPCs on the same side.

Great With: One-on-One multi-foe situations where allies or civilians are present.

STREETWISE [Knowledge/Social]

Knowing how to navigate informal systems: criminal networks, rumors, back channels, and local "how things work." Streetwise is used to find contacts, avoid traps, identify scams, and learn what people won't say openly.

SURVIVAL [Survival]

Travel, navigation, shelter, foraging, weather sense, endurance in hostile environments, and

avoiding natural hazards. Survival also covers tracking basics unless a setting defines a separate tracking skill.

MEDICINE [Technical/Knowledge]

First aid, treatment, stabilizing wounds, preventing infection, identifying causes, and managing recovery. Medicine’s mechanical weight increases because wounds matter greatly in One-on-One play.

Cross-Reference: Wounds and stacking rules are defined in Book I.

CRAFT [Technical]

Making, repairing, and modifying equipment using the tools and materials of the setting. In fantasy this may be smithing, leatherwork, carpentry. In modern it may include field repairs and maintenance. In futuristic it may include fabrication and modular systems. This is the “make and make it work” skill.

SECURITY [Technical]

Bypassing and defeating barriers and safeguards: locks, alarms, seals, and access restrictions. In fantasy, this may be locks and traps. In modern, locks and alarms. In futuristic, access systems and security layers. (Modules may split this further into lockpicking vs hacking; the foundation skill remains usable.)

INVESTIGATION [Knowledge/Perception]

Finding patterns, linking clues, searching intelligently, reconstructing events, and knowing where evidence would hide. Investigation is not “roll to find the clue.” It is the skill of asking the right questions and conducting the right search.

Director Tip: Use Investigation to determine speed, risk, and completeness—don’t hide the only clue behind one roll.

RESEARCH [Knowledge]

Studying sources, cross-referencing information, interpreting records, and learning from texts, archives, databases, or oral histories depending on genre. Research can be fast and risky in the field, or slow and thorough with time and tools.

LORE [Knowledge]

General understanding of cultures, myths, institutions, history, and the “shape” of the world. Lore is what you know without needing a library. In modern and futuristic genres this may represent broad education, field familiarity, or professional background knowledge.

OBSERVATION [Perception]

Deliberate, focused noticing: watching someone’s hands, spotting tiny details, tailing behavior, reading a crime scene’s physical layout. Observation differs from Awareness by being intentional and narrow rather than broad and reactive.

ENDURANCE [Physical]

Resisting exhaustion, holding breath, pushing through pain, tolerating harsh conditions, and staying functional while wounded or under long strain. Endurance often appears when time pressure and attrition are the true threat.

RESISTANCE [Physical/Mental]

A universal “hold fast” skill for resisting toxins, fear, interrogation pressure, psychic intrusion (if applicable), and other forms of forced

compromise. Some genres may split this into physical vs mental resistances; the foundation remains valid.

MELEE [Combat]

Fighting at close range with whatever the setting supports: fists, knives, swords, clubs, improvised tools. Melee is used offensively and defensively depending on combat procedure (defined in Book I).

RANGED [Combat]

Attacking at a distance with whatever the setting supports: bows, thrown weapons, firearms, energy weapons. Like Melee, Ranged ties into the combat contest loop.

DEFENSE [Combat]

A universal defensive skill representing evasive movement, blocking, parrying, and minimizing harm under attack. Some genre modules may allow different defense options (dodge vs parry vs shield), but DEFENSE remains a valid universal anchor.

Cross-Reference: Attack vs defense procedure is defined in Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop.

4.6 Using Core Skills With Genre Skill Sets

Genre modules provide specialized skills (Medieval/Fantasy, Modern, Futuristic), but the foundation skills remain usable.

When both a foundation skill and a genre skill could apply:

- Prefer the more specific skill if the character has it.

- Use the foundation skill if the specific one does not exist in the current skill set, or if the scene is being run as a mixed-genre crossover.

Example:

- A futuristic “Zero-G Maneuvering” skill may replace Athletics for movement in microgravity—but Athletics remains the fallback.
- A modern “Firearms” skill may replace Ranged in a gunfight—but Ranged remains usable if you are using the universal list.

Director Tip: The skill list is not a cage. Pick the skill that best matches the approach.

4.7 Skill Compatibility and Power Scale

One-on-One assumes one-for-one power scale across genres by default. A futuristic weapon may have different damage dice than a sword, but wounds still convert to the same tiers. A magical effect may function like a weapon attack or a contest, but it still resolves through the same loop.

Mixing genres does not erase training requirements:

- If a skill is marked Specialist in a module, it requires access and training.
- If gear is restricted by a genre’s access assumptions, those restrictions still apply.

Cross-Reference: Gear availability is formalized in Book I: Gear Access.

4.8 Callouts for Skills (Director Tools)

Director Tip: Keep rolls meaningful

If a skill roll doesn’t change the situation, don’t roll. Let competence stand.

Common Misuse: “One skill solves everything”

No single skill should replace planning. If a plan is poor, apply Disadvantage. If the approach is brilliant, apply Advantage. The skill is not the whole story.

Great With: Clocks

Skills become sharper when paired with Clocks: alarms, suspicion, reinforcements, bleeding, pursuit, collapse. A skill roll can succeed while still advancing a Clock—or fail while still granting a Lesser Win.

4.9 Cross-References

- For the detailed three-genre skill sets, see **Book I: Genre Skill Sets**.
 - For Specialist skill definitions and access rules, see **Book I: Specialist Skills** and **Gear Access**.
 - For combat usage of Melee/Ranged/Defense, see **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop**.
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CHAPTER 5: EQUIPMENT

Medieval/Fantasy • Modern • Futuristic / Science-Fantasy

Equipment in One-on-One serves three jobs:

1. **It makes intent concrete.** (“I’m not just sneaking—I’m using a grappling hook and climbing spikes.”)
2. **It creates Advantage or removes Disadvantage.** (Tools, positioning, preparation.)
3. **It defines what kind of trouble you can survive.** (Armor, protection, medical supplies, escape options.)

This chapter is a **foundation library**: broad, genre-ready equipment lists you can pull from immediately. Your setting modules will add detail (specific weapons, specialized gear, signature items), but these lists cover the “generic” backbone of play.

Core rule: Equipment does not change the core resolution loop. It changes *circumstances*—and those circumstances are expressed as **Advantages/Disadvantages (+10/+20/+30 or –10/–20/–30)**, access limits, or narrative permissions (“you can attempt this at all”).

Cross-Reference: For what is common vs restricted, licensing/contact requirements, and “standard kit” expectations by genre, see **Book I: Gear Access**.

5.1 How Equipment Works in One-on-One

Gear as Permission

Some actions are simply not feasible without the right gear.

Examples:

- You can’t reliably pick a quality lock without lock tools.

- You can’t treat a Severe wound properly without medical supplies.
- You can’t safely rappel without a rope and anchor plan.

When gear grants permission, the roll is still a skill roll—gear simply makes the attempt reasonable.

Gear as Advantage/Disadvantage

Most of the time, gear translates into the modifier ladder:

- Proper tools for the task: **Advantage +10**
- Excellent tools or ideal kit: **Advantage +20**
- Perfect kit + preparation + ideal conditions: **Advantage +30**

Conversely:

- Improvised tools: **Disadvantage –10**
- Wrong tool for the job: **Disadvantage –20**
- No tools where tools are required: often **no roll** (you can’t meaningfully attempt it) or an extreme Disadvantage if the Director allows a desperate try.

Gear as Consequence Buffer

Armor, shields, helmets, and protection do not remove danger; they help define what danger looks like when it lands. In One-on-One, survivability is not just “hit points”—it’s **wound tiers**, recovery pressure, and the ability to keep functioning under stress.

Cross-Reference: Damage dice converting into wound tiers is defined in **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop** and **Book I: Wounds & Stacking**.

5.2 Equipment Format and Tags

To keep lists fast at the table, items in this chapter use light tags:

- **[Weapon]** offensive tool used through the combat loop
- **[Armor]** / **[Shield]** protective gear
- **[Tool]** utility kit that commonly creates Advantage
- **[Consumable]** limited-use item (potion, charge pack, smoke grenade)
- **[Comms]** communication/coordination gear
- **[Sensor]** detection and scanning gear
- **[Explosive]** dangerous area effect tools (when applicable)
- **[Survival]** travel and endurance support

Tags never alter mechanics. They just help you find what you need.

5.3 Medieval/Fantasy Equipment Library

Weapons (Medieval/Fantasy)

These are generic weapon categories. Exact damage dice and special properties are set by your module or by the Director's chosen weapon profiles.

- **Dagger / Knife** [Weapon] — concealable, quick, useful as a tool.
- **Short Sword** [Weapon] — reliable sidearm; common among soldiers and travelers.
- **Long Sword** [Weapon] — balanced main weapon; often respected socially.
- **Greatsword** [Weapon] — heavy, committed strikes; demands space.
- **Axe (Hand)** [Weapon] — brutal chopping; doubles as a field tool.
- **Axe (Great)** [Weapon] — cleaving power; slow recovery after swings.

- **Mace / Hammer** [Weapon] — crushing force, effective against armor.
- **Spear** [Weapon] — reach, control, and leverage; strong in tight tactics.
- **Polearm** [Weapon] — reach plus hooks; excellent against mounted foes.
- **Staff** [Weapon] — control weapon; also a travel aid.
- **Bow** [Weapon] — quiet ranged pressure; requires line of sight.
- **Crossbow** [Weapon] — high punch, slower reload, easier training.
- **Sling** [Weapon] — compact ranged weapon; ammo is easy to find.
- **Throwing Knives / Axes** [Weapon] — surprise ranged option, limited ammunition.
- **Net** [Weapon/Tool] — control and entangle; creates openings rather than wounds.
- **Shield Bash** [Weapon/Shield] — used through melee contests; creates space and disruption.

Director Tip: In fantasy play, weapons often carry social meaning. A noble's blade, a temple mace, a ranger's bow—these can matter as much as damage.

Armor and Protection (Medieval/Fantasy)

- **Padded / Gambeson** [Armor] — basic protection, common among travelers.
- **Leather Armor** [Armor] — flexible, quiet; favored by scouts.
- **Studded Leather** [Armor] — tougher than leather; noisier and heavier.

- **Chain Shirt** [Armor] — strong torso protection; costly but common to professionals.
- **Chain Hauberk** [Armor] — heavier coverage; tiring over time.
- **Scale Armor** [Armor] — layered defense; conspicuous and weighty.
- **Breastplate** [Armor] — strong front protection; mobility varies.
- **Full Plate Harness** [Armor] — maximum conventional protection; loud, demanding maintenance.
- **Buckler** [Shield] — light defense; pairs well with agile fighting.
- **Round Shield** [Shield] — all-purpose defense; common militia gear.
- **Tower Shield** [Shield] — powerful cover; slows movement and tight actions.
- **Helmet (Open)** [Armor] — protects, but keeps awareness high.
- **Helmet (Closed)** [Armor] — stronger protection; can impose situational Disadvantage to perception in some scenes.
- **Cloak / Mantle** [Tool] — concealment, warmth, disguise, improvised bandage.
- **Travel Boots** [Tool/Survival] — reduces environmental penalties across long travel.
- **Rope (50 ft) + Grapnel** [Tool/Survival] — climbing, descent, rescue, ambush setup.
- **Climbing Spikes** [Tool] — turn dangerous climbs into plausible attempts.
- **Pitons + Hammer** [Tool] — anchors, climbing safety, barricade reinforcement.
- **Lantern + Oil** [Tool] — reliable light; also a social signal in darkness.
- **Torch Bundle** [Tool] — cheap light; also fire utility.
- **Tinderbox / Fire Kit** [Tool/Survival] — survival essential; enables heat and signals.
- **Bedroll** [Survival] — reduces travel fatigue and exposure penalties.
- **Waterskin + Rations** [Survival] — baseline endurance support.
- **Map Case + Charcoal** [Tool] — navigation, planning, field notes.
- **Herbalist Kit** [Tool] — supports Medicine in wilderness contexts.
- **Healer's Kit** [Tool] — bandages, needles, salves; stabilizing and treatment support.
- **Smith's Tools** [Tool] — repairs and modifications; supports Craft.
- **Carpenter's Tools** [Tool] — barricades, field fixes, improvised structures.
- **Disguise Kit** [Tool] — masks, dyes, false papers; supports Deception.
- **Holy Symbol / Ritual Kit** [Tool] — authority in religious contexts; may create social Advantage.
- **Signal Whistle / Horn** [Tool] — call help, distract, coordinate.

Common Misuse: Treating armor as “invincibility.” Armor changes the *shape* of harm; it doesn't cancel consequences.

Tools and Kits (Medieval/Fantasy)

- **Lock Tools** [Tool] — enable Security/lock work; often grants Advantage.
 - **Crowbar / Pry Bar** [Tool] — leverage; common “force entry” aid.
-

Consumables (Medieval/Fantasy)

- **Healing Draught** [Consumable] — recovery aid; exact effect set by module.
- **Antitoxin** [Consumable] — counter poison; timing matters.
- **Smokestick / Smoke Pot** [Consumable] — escape, confusion, cover.
- **Alchemist's Fire** [Consumable] — ignition and area denial; dangerous.
- **Flash Powder** [Consumable] — momentary disorientation; creates openings.
- **Oil Flask** [Consumable] — slippery ground, fire spread, trap setup.
- **Caltrops** [Consumable/Tool] — slows pursuit, controls space.
- **Chalk / Marking Powder** [Tool] — tracking, marking doors, revealing hidden gaps.
- **Mirror (Small)** [Tool] — corners, signal flashes, inspection.

Great With: Stealth scenes, escapes, and “Lesser Win” complications (“You got out, but you had to burn your only smoke pot.”)

5.4 Modern Equipment Library

Modern gear assumes contemporary industry, firearms, electronics, and regulated access. This is a foundation list; modules may sharpen it by region, era, or organization.

Weapons (Modern)

- **Handgun** [Weapon] — concealable ranged threat; legal/restricted by setting.
- **Revolver** [Weapon] — reliable, simple; slower reload.
- **Shotgun** [Weapon] — close-range stopping power; loud.

- **Carbine / Rifle** [Weapon] — range and control; conspicuous.
- **SMG / Compact Automatic** [Weapon] — close-quarters pressure; ammo-hungry.
- **Knife** [Weapon/Tool] — utility and last-ditch weapon.
- **Baton** [Weapon] — control tool; often used by law/security.
- **Pepper Spray** [Tool] — compliance tool; can create Advantage without lethal force.
- **Taser / Stun Device** [Tool] — short-range disable; risk of failure under stress.
- **Improvised Weapon** [Weapon] — chair, pipe, bottle; effects depend on context.

Director Tip: In modern play, consequences for weapon use are often social/legal as much as physical. Make that part of the stakes.

Protection (Modern)

- **Ballistic Vest (Soft)** [Armor] — conceal-friendly protection.
- **Ballistic Vest (Plate)** [Armor] — heavier; stronger protection; more obvious.
- **Helmet (Ballistic)** [Armor] — protects; may reduce comfort over time.
- **Riot Shield** [Shield] — cover tool; enables “advance under protection.”
- **Protective Goggles** [Tool] — reduce penalties from smoke/flash/chem irritants.
- **Respirator / Gas Mask** [Tool] — enables operation in toxic environments.
- **Hearing Protection** [Tool] — reduces long-term penalties in loud environments.
- **Gloves (Tactical / Work)** [Tool] — grip, protection, evidence handling.

Tools and Kits (Modern)

- **Smartphone** [Comms/Tool] — maps, camera, notes, emergency calls.
- **Encrypted Phone / Burner** [Comms] — secure contact, disposable identity.
- **Laptop / Tablet** [Tool] — research, planning, data access.
- **Basic Tool Kit** [Tool] — field repairs; supports Craft/maintenance.
- **Lock Bypass Kit** [Tool] — supports Security; legality varies.
- **Bolt Cutters** [Tool] — brute access; loud and obvious.
- **Duct Tape + Zip Ties** [Tool] — restraint, repairs, improvisation.
- **Flashlight (High Power)** [Tool] — reliable light; can dazzle in darkness.
- **Headlamp** [Tool] — hands-free; reduces penalties during complex tasks.
- **First Aid Kit** [Tool] — stabilizing and field treatment support.
- **Trauma Kit** [Tool] — more advanced medical support; often restricted.
- **Binoculars** [Sensor] — surveillance, spotting, recon.
- **Camera (Dedicated)** [Sensor] — evidence gathering; can create social leverage.
- **Audio Recorder** [Tool] — proof, blackmail risk, investigation support.
- **Handcuffs** [Tool] — restraint; can escalate legal consequences.
- **Crowbar** [Tool] — leverage; quiet entry when used well.
- **Climbing Rope + Harness** [Tool] — safe vertical movement.

- **Fire Extinguisher** [Tool] — hazard control; also improvised pressure tool.
- **Road Flares** [Consumable/Tool] — signals, distractions, hazard marking.

Consumables and Tactical Items (Modern)

- **Smoke Grenade** [Consumable] — conceal movement; breaks lines of sight.
- **Flashbang** [Consumable] — disorientation; high consequence tool.
- **Tear Gas / Irritant** [Consumable] — area denial; heavy social/legal weight.
- **Adrenal Stimulant** [Consumable] — short burst of performance; module-defined effects.
- **Painkiller Dose** [Consumable] — function-through-injury tool; consequences may follow.
- **Energy Bar / Water Pack** [Consumable/Survival] — keeps endurance stable during long scenes.

Common Misuse: Using consumables as “free wins.” These tools often create Advantage or deny opponent Advantage—they don’t erase stakes.

5.5 Futuristic / Science-Fantasy Equipment Library

This category covers clean sci-fi and science-fantasy crossover: drones, powered armor, energy weapons, advanced sensors, and “relic-tech” that feels magical but still resolves through the same system.

Weapons (Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)

- **Energy Pistol** [Weapon] — compact ranged weapon; may have stun mode.

- **Energy Rifle** [Weapon] — stable long-range platform; conspicuous.
- **Plasma Projector** [Weapon] — high threat, high consequence, heavy power demand.
- **Needle Gun** [Weapon] — quiet precision; often used for toxins or trackers.
- **Smart-Carbine** [Weapon] — assisted targeting; may reduce situational penalties.
- **Shock Baton** [Weapon/Tool] — close control; nonlethal option.
- **Monoblade / Vibroknife** [Weapon] — close-range lethality; concealable.
- **Vibrosword / Resonant Blade** [Weapon] — melee weapon with tech edge.
- **Gauss Launcher** [Weapon] — heavy penetration; loud and rare.
- **Micro-Missile Pod** [Weapon] — extreme escalation; usually restricted.
- **Stasis Net Projector** [Tool] — capture/contain tool; creates openings rather than wounds.
- **Relic Blade (Runed-Tech)** [Weapon] — science-fantasy melee; functions like a weapon but may interface with modules' power rules.
- **Arc Grenade** [Consumable] — disruptive burst; can disable or scatter foes depending on module.

Director Tip: Even when gear feels “mythic,” resolve it through the same loop: declare, modify, roll, consequence.

Protection (Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)

- **Combat Suit** [Armor] — baseline protective weave; common professional kit.
- **Hardsuit / EVA Suit** [Armor/Survival] — vacuum/hostile environment capability.
- **Powered Armor Frame** [Armor] — strength assistance and protection; training required.
- **Energy Shield Belt** [Armor/Tool] — momentary protection burst; often charge-based.
- **Helmet HUD** [Sensor/Tool] — overlays, targeting aids, comms integration.
- **Thermal Cloak** [Tool] — reduces detection; can convert surveillance into a contest.
- **Nanoweave Lining** [Armor] — subtle protection upgrade; common in espionage sci-fi.
- **Radiation Hood / Filter Mask** [Tool] — enables operation in contaminated zones.

Tools, Comms, Sensors (Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)

- **Wrist Comms** [Comms] — always-on communication; can be jammed.
- **Encrypted Uplink Key** [Tool] — secure access; high leverage in infiltration.
- **Portable Scanner** [Sensor] — life signs, heat, structural scans (module-defined).
- **Drone (Recon)** [Sensor] — scouting; creates Advantage through information.
- **Drone (Utility)** [Tool] — carries, cuts, repairs; supports Craft/Security.

- **Medpatch Kit** [Tool] — quick stabilization support; still respects wound tiers.
- **Auto-Suture Injector** [Tool] — field closure and infection prevention aid.
- **Fabricator (Handheld)** [Tool] — rapid part printing; limited by materials/blueprints.
- **Universal Tool Arm** [Tool] — multi-tool suite; consistent Advantage in repairs.
- **Gravity Line / Smart Rope** [Tool] — climbing, anchoring, rescue, zero-g utility.
- **Thermal Cutter** [Tool] — breach tool; loud and high consequence.
- **Holo-Projector** [Tool] — distraction, deception support, social leverage.
- **Translator Node** [Tool] — reduces penalties in alien/unknown language scenes.
- **Data Spike** [Tool] — direct access tool; supports Security-style bypass scenes.
- **Memory Shard / Evidence Core** [Tool] — portable proof; may become a campaign linchpin.

Consumables and Devices (Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)

- **Charge Cell / Power Pack** [Consumable] — keeps key devices online.
- **Stim Capsule** [Consumable] — short burst of performance; consequences may follow.
- **Pain Nullifier Dose** [Consumable] — function-through-injury tool; risky.
- **Smoke Nano-Cloud** [Consumable] — concealment tuned against sensors.
- **Flash Pulse Emitter** [Consumable] — disrupts vision and some optics briefly.

- **EMP Charge** [Consumable] — disables electronics in an area (module-defined reach).
- **Seal Foam** [Consumable] — emergency patch for hull breaches and leaks.
- **Relic Vial (Aetheric)** [Consumable] — science-fantasy catalyst; interacts with module powers when present.

Great With: Destiny spends and Lesser Wins—high-tech scenes thrive on “you got it, but the battery is nearly dead” complications.

5.6 Using Equipment Across Mixed Genres

One-on-One supports mixing skill sets and gear libraries, but two truths remain constant:

1. **Power scale is one-for-one by default.**
The core mechanics do not change when genres mix.
2. **Mixing does not erase training or access.** If a piece of gear is restricted in its native genre, it remains restricted unless a module explicitly changes that.

Director Tip: If mixed-genre gear enters a lower-tech setting, treat it as rare and consequential. The gear itself becomes a story object.

Common Misuse: Letting genre-mix become a shortcut. A powered armor frame doesn’t replace tactics; it changes the tactical problems.

5.7 Quick Equipment Guidance for Directors

Director Tip: Offer gear as choices, not rewards only

In One-on-One play, gear often acts like an extra character feature. Present meaningful options:

- “You can take the heavier armor or the stealth kit—what matters more right now?”

Common Misuse: Gear lists as shopping catalogs

Equipment is a story tool. If the table spends too long “shopping,” make gear a mission decision (loadout) rather than a marketplace simulation.

Great With: Clocks and Consequences

Gear shines when tied to pressure:

- “You can breach quietly (slow) or fast (loud). The Clock is ticking.”

5.8 Cross-References

- For **availability and standard kit by genre**, see **Book I: Gear Access**.
 - For **weapon damage dice and wound conversion**, see **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop** and **Book I: Wounds & Stacking**.
 - For **vehicle rules**, proceed to **Book 0, Chapter 6: Vehicles**.
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CHAPTER 6: VEHICLES

Medieval/Fantasy • Modern • Futuristic / Science-Fantasy

Vehicles in One-on-One are more than transportation. They are **scene-shaping tools**:

- They change what “escape” means.
- They change how threats reach you.
- They turn terrain into pressure.
- They turn time into a weapon.

This chapter is a foundation library of vehicles across the three baseline genres. These entries are written to be **system-light** and **module-friendly**: they tell you what a vehicle is for, what it commonly enables, and what kinds of Advantages/Disadvantages it tends to create.

Core rule: Vehicles do not replace the core resolution loop. When a vehicle matters, it changes circumstances ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$), enables a skill to apply, or changes stakes and Clocks.

Cross-Reference: For the universal chase mini-loop that works across all genres, see **Book I: Vehicle Chase Mini-Loop**.

6.1 How Vehicles Work in One-on-One

Vehicles as Advantage

A vehicle often provides **Advantage** simply by changing the geometry of a scene:

- Speed advantage: **+10 to +20** to escape or reposition
- Stability advantage: **+10** to aim, carry, or perform tasks while moving
- Protection advantage: **+10 to +20** to resist certain hazards (weather, debris, small impacts)

Vehicles as Disadvantage

Vehicles also create liabilities:

- Noise, visibility, and heat signatures can impose **Disadvantage** on stealth.
- Tight spaces, crowded streets, poor roads, or unfamiliar controls impose **Disadvantage** on maneuvering.
- Damage and stress can escalate consequences through Clocks.

Vehicles as Stakes and Clocks

Vehicle scenes are often best expressed through Clocks:

- **Distance Clock** (close the gap / widen the gap)
- **Damage Clock** (systems failing)
- **Detection Clock** (pursuit locks on)
- **Terrain Clock** (bridge out, storm front, traffic density)

This keeps vehicle play fast and readable without inventing a separate minigame for every setting.

6.2 Vehicle Basics (Universal Assumptions)

A vehicle generally has four practical features:

1. **Mobility Type** — wheels, hooves, tracks, rotors, wings, thrust, grav plates, etc.
2. **Capacity** — how many bodies and how much gear can be carried.
3. **Protection** — how well it reduces harm or exposure.
4. **Signature** — how easy it is to detect: noise, tracks, heat, visibility.

Director Tip: You rarely need a “full stat block” for a vehicle to run a good vehicle scene. Decide capacity, protection, and signature, then run the chase loop and apply Advantages/Disadvantages.

6.3 Medieval/Fantasy Vehicles Library

Medieval/fantasy “vehicles” are often animals, carts, boats, and rare magical conveyances. Even when magic exists, the vehicle still resolves through the same core loop—magic simply changes what’s plausible.

Mounts (Medieval/Fantasy)

- **Riding Horse** — fast travel, scouting, escape; vulnerable to difficult terrain.
 - Often grants **Advantage +10** on outrunning foot pursuit on open ground.
 - Often suffers **Disadvantage –10** in dense forest, stairs, or tight alleys.
- **Warhorse** — heavier, trained under stress; more stable in battle scenes.
 - Often grants **Advantage** on “hold steady” moments (charging, resisting fear).
- **Pack Mule / Donkey** — cargo and endurance more than speed.
 - Converts travel strain into fewer consequences; not a chase winner.
- **Draft Horse** — for wagons and heavy loads; slow but persistent.
- **Riding Elk / Stag (Regional)** — strong in forests and rough terrain; culturally meaningful.
 - Often **Advantage** in terrain it’s adapted to; **Disadvantage** in cities.
- **Camel** — desert endurance and heat tolerance; travel survival multiplier.
- **Giant Riding Lizard / Beast Mount (Fantasy)** — terrain-specific mounts (swamps, cliffs).

- Often grants **Advantage** in its home terrain; may impose **Disadvantage** in civilized areas due to fear and handling.

Common Misuse: Treating mounts as silent and consequence-free. Hooves make noise. Animals panic. Feeding and care matter when the story pressures it.

Carts, Wagons, and Carriages

- **Handcart** — small cargo transport; slow; great for “move the evidence.”
- **Cart** — moderate cargo; stable on roads; fragile off-road.
- **Wagon** — major haul capacity; slow; draws attention; excellent for caravan play.
- **Coach / Carriage** — travel with status; can create social leverage at a gate.
- **Armored Wagon** — protection for valuables; slow; a magnet for raids.

Director Tip: Wagons are perfect Clocks. “Wheel breaks,” “axle snaps,” “bridge inspection,” “bandits close distance.”

Watercraft (Medieval/Fantasy)

- **Rowboat** — quiet, small capacity, good for stealth crossings.
- **River Barge** — cargo and mass; slow turn; excellent for ambush scenes.
- **Sailing Boat** — travel; wind dependence becomes a pacing tool.
- **Fishing Skiff** — plausible cover identity; good for infiltration.
- **Galley / Longship (Regional)** — fast with crew; a mobile base.

Fantasy Conveyances (Rare)

- **Enchanted Sled** — ignores snow/ice penalties; strong travel tool.
- **Wind Skiff** — magical sail platform; often high signature, high risk.
- **Bounded Carpet / Disc** — small capacity flight; usually restricted and story-significant.
- **Portal Anchor Cart** — science-fantasy crossover: a wagon hauling a gate device.

Director Tip: Rare conveyances should be plot objects, not shopping items—unless your module explicitly makes them common.

6.4 Modern Vehicles Library

Modern vehicles dominate terrain and time but carry legal, social, and surveillance consequences. Their greatest mechanical impact is usually **speed, cover, and signature**.

Ground Vehicles (Modern)

- **Bicycle** — quiet, agile, low signature; limited carrying capacity.
 - Often **Advantage** for weaving through congestion; **Disadvantage** in high-speed pursuit.
- **Motorcycle** — fast, agile, exposed rider; high escape potential.
 - Often **Advantage +10/+20** in traffic; vulnerable to hazards.
- **Compact Car** — common, low attention; flexible urban travel.
- **Sedan** — comfort, stability; less agile in tight lanes.
- **SUV** — off-road capability; higher profile; better rough terrain.

- **Pickup Truck** — cargo utility; a “gear mover”; higher signature.
- **Van (Utility)** — transport and concealment of gear; excellent for “mobile base” scenes.
- **Box Truck** — large cargo; slow maneuver; heavy consequences if spotted.
- **Armored Vehicle (Security)** — high protection; extreme attention and restriction.

Director Tip: Modern vehicles create “soft obstacles” everywhere: traffic, cameras, witnesses, license plates, police response Clocks.

Watercraft (Modern)

- **Jet Ski** — fast, agile; limited range; high signature.
- **Motorboat** — general use; variable speed; coastal and river play.
- **Cabin Cruiser** — comfort and endurance; a floating safehouse.
- **Fishing Boat** — plausible cover; useful for smuggling scenes.
- **Coast Guard / Patrol Craft** — authority vehicle; creates social pressure.

Air Vehicles (Modern)

Air vehicles are often restricted, rare, or story-driven in a One-on-One campaign:

- **Helicopter (Civil)** — mobility; high signature; expensive and noticeable.
- **Helicopter (Law/Military)** — pursuit dominance; “detection Clock” engine.
- **Small Plane** — long range; dependent on airstrips and fuel.
- **Drone (Consumer)** — surveillance tool; low protection; high utility.

Common Misuse: Assuming air solves everything. Air creates exposure: radar, witnesses, tracking, and response escalation.

6.5 Futuristic / Science-Fantasy Vehicles Library

Futuristic vehicles expand mobility types (hover, grav, void, jump-capable craft) and integrate sensors and automation. They still resolve through the same core loop, but their **signature** and **systems** often become the real stakes.

Ground and Hover Vehicles (Futuristic)

- **Hoverbike** — agile, fast, high signature; great in vertical cityscapes.
- **Hoversled** — cargo platform; stable; often used for salvage and hauling.
- **Grav Car** — silent glide, smooth acceleration; sensor-visible.
- **Tracked Utility Crawler** — rugged; slow; excellent in ruins and bad terrain.
- **Powered Cargo Rig** — heavy industrial hauler; intimidating, slow, unstoppable.

Director Tip: Futuristic “quiet” doesn’t mean invisible. Trade engine noise for heat, EM, and sensor footprints.

Atmospheric Air Vehicles (Futuristic)

- **Tilt-Rotor Skimmer** — rapid insertion/extraction; high signature.
 - **VTOL Dropship** — troop/cargo; can be a mobile scene set-piece.
 - **Autonomous Drone Swarm (Carrier)** — support platform; fragile if jammed.
 - **Luxury Aerocar** — status vehicle; creates social leverage and attention.
-

Space and Near-Space Craft (Science-Fantasy Ready)

These are intentionally broad. Modules can add starship systems, but the core assumptions still hold.

- **Shuttle** — short-range orbital hops; limited weapons; heavy “systems Clock” potential.
- **Courier Ship** — fast, small crew; perfect for One-on-One campaigns.
- **Patrol Cutter** — authority; creates pursuit dominance and legal pressure.
- **Freighter** — cargo and story hooks; slow turns, big consequences.
- **Relic Skiff (Aether-Tech)** — science-fantasy craft with “impossible” movement; story-significant.

Director Tip: For One-on-One, smaller ships run better than battleships. A courier or shuttle keeps scenes personal and survivable.

Unusual Science-Fantasy Conveyances (Hybrid)

- **Living Mount-Beast (Bio-Engineered)** — fast in hostile worlds; needs care.
 - **Void-Sail Barge** — slow but persistent; eerie; perfect for horror sci-fi.
 - **Phase Runner** — short “blink” movement; ideal for chase twists; high risk.
 - **Gate Sled (Portal Hauler)** — vehicle built around hauling gate hardware; campaign backbone.
-

6.6 Vehicles and the Core Mechanics

Vehicles interact with the system in consistent ways:

A) The Roll Choice

When a vehicle scene needs a roll, the Director chooses a relevant skill from the active genre list (or the universal list if mixed). Common universal options include:

- **Athletics** (mount handling in a pinch, desperate leaps)
- **Awareness/Observation** (spot hazards, read terrain)
- **Craft** (field repairs)
- **Command** (directing allies during vehicle chaos)
- **Survival** (navigation, weather, off-road travel)

Genre modules add specialist piloting/drive skills, but the foundation skills remain usable as fallbacks.

B) Modifiers

Vehicles frequently create clear modifiers:

- Superior vehicle in open terrain: **Advantage +10/+20**
- Inferior vehicle, bad terrain, unfamiliar controls: **Disadvantage -10/-20**
- Heavy damage, system failure, low fuel: **Disadvantage** (and/or a ticking Clock)

C) Contests and Lesser Wins

Most vehicle chases and races are **Contests**. Remember:

- If both fail, least bad gets a **Lesser Win**—reduced effect with complication. This keeps chases from stalling.

D) Destiny in Vehicle Scenes

Destiny Points are often at their best in chases:

- “I spend Destiny to squeeze through the gap.”

- “I spend Destiny to jam their lock-on.” The Protagonist may boost their roll and hinder the opponent in the same contest, as always.

6.7 Director Tools: Making Vehicles Feel Like Vehicles

Director Tip: Vehicles are environment multipliers

A vehicle scene is rarely about “driving well.” It’s about:

- traffic
- terrain
- weather
- witnesses
- fuel
- damage
- pursuit
- time pressure

Common Misuse: Turning every chase into a long minigame

One-on-One stays sharp when chases resolve in meaningful beats. Use the universal chase loop (Book I) and let Clocks and Degree handle nuance.

Great With: Companions

Vehicle scenes are perfect for Companion support:

- **Assist:** calling hazards, guiding route, stabilizing controls
 - **Screen:** blocking pursuers, distracting, buying seconds
 - **Anchor:** delaying a pursuit Clock tick, securing a door, holding a latch
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6.8 Cross-References

- For the **universal vehicle chase mini-loop**, see **Book I: Vehicle Chase Mini-Loop**.
 - For **gear access and restrictions** (licenses, contacts, standard kits), see **Book I: Gear Access**.
 - For **combat rules** that apply on or around vehicles, see **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop**.
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CHAPTER 7: BESTIARY

Medieval/Fantasy • Modern • Futuristic / Science-Fantasy

One-on-One is designed to run a full campaign with a single Protagonist. That means threats must be **dangerous but playable**: readable, meaningful, and able to scale without becoming unfair. This bestiary is built as a **foundation library**—broad, genre-ready enemies and creatures you can drop into scenes immediately.

This chapter focuses on **threat identity and use**, not heavy stat blocks. In One-on-One, the Director can run most creatures using the same tools used for any challenge:

- Choose a relevant skill for the creature's attack/defense (or use a simple baseline)
- Apply circumstances through **Advantages/Disadvantages** ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$)
- Run combat and contests through the core loop
- Translate outcomes into **wound tiers** via the combat rules
- Use **Clocks** to express escalation (reinforcements, frenzy, fear, collapse)
- Remember: mutual failure in contests produces a **Lesser Win**, not a stall

Cross-Reference: Full combat procedure, wound conversion, and wound stacking are in **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop** and **Book I: Wounds & Stacking**. Pacing Clocks are detailed in **Book I: Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**.

7.1 How to Use This Bestiary (Director Procedure)

When you pick a creature or adversary from this chapter, do the following:

1. **Define the threat's role** in the scene:

- hunter, guard, ambush predator, tank, swarm, controller, sniper, terror, hazard-beast

2. **Choose its signature move** (what it does that forces choices):

- pounce, grapple, poison, suppressive fire, sensor lock, psychic pressure, corrosion, fear aura

3. **Choose its typical environment** (where it is strongest):

- tight tunnels, open plains, rooftops, crowds, water, vacuum, ruins

4. **Decide its pressure tool:**

- brute harm, forced movement, a Clock, or a social consequence

5. **Scale it for One-on-One fairness:**

- single strong foe is often better than many weak foes
- if using groups, run them as a single threat with a Clock and a few defined moves

Director Tip: One-on-One fights are best when the Protagonist can *read* what is happening and choose a plan. Telegraph the creature's signature move early.

7.2 Threat Categories You Can Reuse Everywhere

These categories work in any genre. You can "skin" them as needed.

- **Brute:** hard hitter, slow, forces defense choices
- **Skirmisher:** fast, mobile, punishes positioning

- **Ambusher:** strikes from hiding, then retreats
- **Controller:** disables, grapples, pins, locks down
- **Sniper:** long range pressure, punishes exposure
- **Swarm:** many small threats, represented as a single Clocked hazard
- **Hazard-Beast:** environment threat (fire, acid, disease, collapse)
- **Boss:** a named antagonist with a Clocked escalation and multiple moves

Use these as the “mechanical identity,” then choose a creature from the lists below.

7.3 Medieval/Fantasy Bestiary Library

These entries are written for classic fantasy, folklore, and “dungeon logic,” but they remain compatible with mixed-genre play.

HUMANOID THREATS (FANTASY)

- **Bandit / Highwayman** — ambush, intimidation, numbers advantage.
 - *Signature move:* threaten the Companion or take a hostage to force a choice.
 - *Great With:* chase scenes, moral stakes, “Lesser Win” escapes.
- **Mercenary Veteran** — disciplined fighter, uses cover and tactics.
 - *Signature move:* bait-and-counter; forces the Protagonist to commit.
- **Cultist Cell** — zeal, ritual pressure, reinforcements Clock.
 - *Signature move:* ritual countdown (Clock) that must be interrupted.
- **Temple Knight / Zealot** — armored, relentless, socially protected.

- *Signature move:* declares judgment; consequences extend beyond the fight.
- **Assassin** — stealth, poison, strike-and-vanish.
 - *Signature move:* first strike from surprise; then retreats into terrain.

Director Tip: Human enemies are best when they have leverage: authority, hostages, a cause, or a Clock.

BEASTS (FANTASY)

- **Wolf Pack** — tracking, coordinated bites, morale pressure.
 - *Signature move:* isolate; force the Protagonist to protect footing and the Companion.
- **Boar / Dire Boar** — charge, stubborn endurance.
 - *Signature move:* straight-line brutality; punishes being in the open.
- **Bear** — overwhelming strength, grapples, fear.
 - *Signature move:* maul and pin; forces Defense choices.
- **Giant Spider** — webbing control, venom, vertical terrain.
 - *Signature move:* restrain (contest) then bite; webbed terrain creates Disadvantage.
- **Cave Lizard / Basilisk-Like Predator** — camouflage, sudden strike.
 - *Signature move:* ambush from stone shadows; pressure through surprise.

- **Swarm (Rats / Bats / Insects)** — attrition and panic, not precision.
 - *Signature move:* overwhelm as a Clock; “bite damage” is less important than stress and infection.

Common Misuse: Running swarms-minor groups as individual enemies. In One-on-One, run swarms as a single hazard with a Clock and a few moves.

MONSTERS (FANTASY)

- **Goblin Raiders** — traps, numbers, harassment.
 - *Signature move:* lure into a kill-zone; use caltrops/tripwires for Disadvantage.
- **Orc Bruiser** — heavy hits, intimidation, aggression.
 - *Signature move:* force a contest of will—either you give ground or take harm.
- **Troll** — regeneration pressure; demands solution beyond “hit it again.”
 - *Signature move:* heals unless countered; creates a time puzzle in combat.
- **Ogre** — massive reach and knockback.
 - *Signature move:* throw debris or bodies; turns environment into damage.
- **Wight / Restless Dead** — draining fear, cold presence, relentless pursuit.
 - *Signature move:* “touch of ruin” as a contest; also drives a dread Clock.
- **Skeleton Warrior** — tireless, predictable, vulnerable to certain tactics.

- *Signature move:* holds a corridor; defensive wall threat.
- **Specter / Haunt** — intangible pressure, fear, possession themes.
 - *Signature move:* contest against Resistance; “Lesser Win” may still impose a chill consequence.
- **Dragon (Young)** — terror, flight, area threat.
 - *Signature move:* forces the Protagonist to use cover and plan; rarely “fair” as a random encounter. Treat as a boss-level story object.

Director Tip: In One-on-One, apex monsters are best as *scenes* rather than “monsters in a room.”

7.4 Modern Bestiary Library

In modern play, threats include people, animals, and “systems” (law, surveillance, organizations). Many modern “monsters” are social consequences with teeth.

HUMAN THREATS (MODERN)

- **Street Thug / Mugger** — close-range pressure, intimidation.
 - *Signature move:* sudden escalation; grabs, knives, quick demands.
- **Organized Gang Crew** — territory, reinforcements, social retaliation.
 - *Signature move:* escalation Clock: “more cars arrive.”
- **Professional Security** — radios, protocols, restraint tools.
 - *Signature move:* containment; blocks exits; calls backup.
- **Detective / Investigator** — not a combat threat; a consequence engine.

- *Signature move:* suspicion Clock; evidence pressure; legal stakes.
- **SWAT / Tactical Unit** — overwhelming force if mishandled.
 - *Signature move:* dominance through coordination; treat as a boss-level “system threat.”
- **Corporate Fixer** — influence, leverage, resources.
 - *Signature move:* consequences happen off-screen: bank accounts, reputations, access.

Director Tip: Modern antagonists often win by making the Protagonist choose between success and being “seen.”

ANIMALS (MODERN)

- **Guard Dog** — detection, pursuit, bite pressure.
 - *Signature move:* pins or forces retreat; perfect for stealth scenes.
 - **Feral Pack (Dogs / Coyotes)** — attrition and territory.
 - *Signature move:* surround; run as a Clocked hazard if numerous.
 - **Large Predator (Bear / Cougar)** — wilderness apex threat.
 - *Signature move:* ambush and maul; forces survival choices.
 - **Swarm (Bees / Wasps)** — panic hazard, pain, retreat pressure.
 - *Signature move:* sting cloud; treat as environmental Clock.
-

“MONSTERS” (MODERN) — SYSTEM AND CRISIS THREATS

These are not fantasy creatures. They are threats that behave like monsters in play.

- **Fire** — spreads, blocks, suffocates.
 - *Signature move:* advancing Clock; creates Disadvantage on complex tasks.
- **Chemical Spill / Gas Leak** — invisible hazard, time pressure.
 - *Signature move:* Resistance contest; failure escalates wounds/conditions.
- **Surveillance Net** — cameras, metadata, plate readers, social exposure.
 - *Signature move:* detection Clock; once full, consequence arrives.
- **Mob / Crowd Panic** — chaos, trampling, blame.
 - *Signature move:* forced movement; social consequences; separates Protagonist and Companion.

Director Tip: These threats shine when framed with clear stakes and Clocks. They don’t need “HP.” They need momentum.

7.5 Futuristic / Science-Fantasy Bestiary Library

Futuristic threats include aliens, drones, engineered horrors, void hazards, and science-fantasy entities that feel like myth wearing circuitry.

HUMAN(ISH) THREATS (FUTURISTIC)

- **Corporate Enforcer** — armor, comms, discipline, legal cover.

- *Signature move:* containment plus escalation; calls drones or backup.
- **Bounty Hunter** — prepared, adaptable, reads the Protagonist’s patterns.
 - *Signature move:* sets traps and counters; treats the Companion as leverage.
- **Void Pirate** — ruthless, mobile, thrives in harsh environments.
 - *Signature move:* boarding pressure; uses environment as weapon.
- **Synth Operative** — enhanced reflexes; “too precise” movement.
 - *Signature move:* predictive tactics; forces the Protagonist to change approach.

DRONES AND MACHINES (FUTURISTIC)

- **Recon Drone** — sensor lock, tracking, marking targets.
 - *Signature move:* detection Clock; once marked, opponents gain Advantage.
- **Security Bot** — armored, tireless, simple directives.
 - *Signature move:* grabs and restrains; pushes the Protagonist into contests.
- **Assault Drone** — fast attack platform; fragile but lethal.
 - *Signature move:* hit-and-strafe; punishes exposure.
- **Swarm Drones** — attrition and pressure.

- *Signature move:* run as a Clocked hazard; “bite” is system damage or wound pressure.

- **Turret Emplacement** — zone denial.

- *Signature move:* suppresses; forces cover/aim choices.

Director Tip: Machines are great at making the Protagonist feel hunted—use Clocks, sensors, and “lock-on” stakes.

ALIEN FAUNA (FUTURISTIC)

- **Razorbeak Stalker** — fast predator, pack intelligence.
 - *Signature move:* feint then pounce; punishes careless movement.
- **Burrower Worm** — terrain threat, sudden emergence.
 - *Signature move:* breaks ground; creates environmental hazard Clock.
- **Spore Beast** — contamination, hallucination, infection.
 - *Signature move:* cloud release; contests against Resistance.
- **Chitin Titan (Apex)** — towering creature; a walking disaster.
 - *Signature move:* area threat; treat as a boss-level scene with multiple Clocks.

SCIENCE-FANTASY ENTITIES (HYBRID)

These are “mythic” threats that still resolve through the same mechanics.

- **Aether Wraith** — phases through matter, drains heat/light.

- *Signature move:* Resistance contest; lesser wins may still impose chill consequences.
- **Relic Sentinel** — ancient guardian machine with ritual logic.
 - *Signature move:* tests worthiness through contests; predictable but brutal.
- **Starborn Parasite** — attaches, whispers, manipulates.
 - *Signature move:* slow-burn Clock (corruption); pressure on the Companion bond.
- **Void Choir (Phenomenon)** — not a creature, a presence.
 - *Signature move:* sanity/fear pressure expressed as Clocks and Resistance contests.

Director Tip: Science-fantasy entities should create choices, not just damage. Their signature move should force a moral or tactical decision.

7.6 Running Groups and Outnumbering in One-on-One

Because there is one Protagonist, large numbers can become unfair fast. When you want “many foes,” use one of these approaches:

A) Run Them as One Threat With a Clock

Treat the group as a single opponent with:

- one or two signature moves
- a **Group Clock** representing cohesion or numbers

Success reduces the Clock; failure advances the group’s pressure.

B) Run a Few Individuals With Clear Roles

Instead of six identical enemies, run:

- one brute
- one skirmisher
- one controller

Each has a purpose. The fight becomes readable.

C) Make Terrain the Second Enemy

Use cover, doors, ladders, crowds, and hazards. This allows tactical play and gives the Protagonist meaningful choices beyond “trade hits.”

Cross-Reference: Multi-foe handling is formalized in **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop**.

7.7 Bestiary Tools

Director Tip: The Companion is a fairness lever

When a scene would be too harsh, don’t nerf the threat—use the Companion:

- Assist for a critical roll
- Screen to reduce pressure
- Anchor to slow a deadly Clock

Common Misuse: “Boss monster as random encounter”

A dragon, tactical unit, or chitin titan should usually be a scene built with stakes, not a surprise in a hallway.

Great With: Lesser Wins

If both fail in a contest, you still advance the scene:

- “You both miss—least bad forces a retreat.”

- “You both fail—least bad gains position, not damage.”
- “You both fail—least bad gets the objective but triggers a complication.”

7.8 Cross-References

- Combat procedure: **Book I: Core Combat & Defense Loop**

- Wound conversion and stacking: **Book I: Wounds & Stacking**
- Pacing and Clocks: **Book I: Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
- Universal chase loop: **Book I: Vehicle Chase Mini-Loop**

BOOK I — STARTER RULES

A fully playable core for One-on-One

This book is the play-facing engine: everything you need to sit down with one Director and one Protagonist and run sessions immediately. Book 0 explained the “why” and provided foundation libraries.

Book I is the “how”—procedures, numbers, and table-ready loops.

One-on-One assumes, always:

- **Director** (GM) + **single Protagonist** (player character)
- A constant **Companion** who participates directly in play
- Core resolution built on **d100 (d%)**
- Circumstances expressed through **Advantages/Disadvantages: ±10 / ±20 / ±30**
- **Degree of Success/Failure (DoS/DoF)** when quality matters
- **Mutual failure in contests** produces a **Lesser Win** for the “least bad” result
- **Destiny Points** can be spent for **+10 to your roll** and/or **–10 to an opponent’s roll** (stackable; both at once)

Editor’s Note: While Book I can be used as a working game system, it’s primary purpose is to show the ideas and mechanics introduced in Book 0 in play. The mechanics and concepts serve as a basis for future setting modules that will flesh the core system out in a manner appropriate to that module’s setting and design.

CHAPTER 1: QUICK START

This chapter is written so you can play **tonight**. If you read nothing else, read this.

One-on-One is a tabletop RPG for **two people**:

- **The Director** runs the world, consequences, Antagonists, and all supporting characters.
- **The Protagonist** is the single player character and the focus of the story.
- A **Companion** is always present and participates directly in play.

The system is built on **d100 (d%)** with fast circumstance modifiers (**±10/±20/±30**), a clean contest structure, and a limited resource called **Destiny** that lets the Protagonist bend key moments.

1.1 What You Need

People

- 1 Director
- 1 Protagonist (player)

Dice

- **Percentile dice (d100)**: typically two d10s (one “tens,” one “ones”)
- Any polyhedral dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20) for damage and random tables

Paper (or digital)

- A character sheet (Protagonist)
- A Companion sheet (or Companion block on the character sheet)

- A short scenario, prompt, or opening situation

1.2 The One-on-One Table Contract

One-on-One works because each role does its job cleanly.

The Director

- Frames scenes with clear pressure
- States stakes before important rolls
- Applies consequences honestly
- Uses modifiers and Clocks to keep momentum

The Protagonist

- Declares intent and approach
- Makes choices that matter
- Spends Destiny when stakes justify it
- Uses the Companion as an active part of survival and story

The Companion

- Is portrayed by the Director
- Has intent directed by the Protagonist in danger scenes
- Acts through universal support moves (Assist/Screen/Anchor)

Director Tip: One-on-One play is more intimate. Clarity is kindness. Say the stakes out loud.

1.3 The Core Loop (Play in 30 Seconds)

Whenever anything uncertain and meaningful happens, run this loop:

1. **Director frames the scene.**

2. **Protagonist declares intent.** (“I want to ____.”)
3. **Protagonist states approach.** (“I do it by ____.”)
4. **Director chooses Test or Contest** and states stakes.
5. **Apply modifiers** ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$) and spend Destiny if desired.
6. **Roll d100.**
7. **Resolve** (success/failure; Degree if needed).
8. **Director applies consequence** and the scene changes.

That is the system.

1.4 When to Roll (and When Not To)

Roll when all three are true:

- The outcome is uncertain
- The outcome matters
- Success and failure both change the scene

Don’t roll when:

- The action is automatic with time/tools
- Failure wouldn’t matter
- The roll would only slow the story

Common Misuse: “Roll to find the clue.”

Better: give the clue if it’s required, and roll to determine **speed, risk, and what it costs** (a Clock tick, exposure, leaving traces).

1.5 The Only Numbers You Need Right Away

A) Skill and Attribute Tests (d100)

Roll $d100 \leq \text{your skill/attribute}$ to succeed.

B) Advantage / Disadvantage Ladder

- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** -10 / -20 / -30

Apply to the target number.

C) Degree (When Quality Matters)

- **DoS:** Target – Roll (on success)
- **DoF:** Roll – Target (on failure)

Use Degree for contests, combat quality, and time pressure—only when it changes what happens next.

D) Contests (including mutual failure)

In a Contest, both roll:

1. **Success beats failure**
2. If **both succeed**, higher **DoS** wins
3. If **both fail**, lower **DoF** wins a **Lesser Win**

Lesser Win: reduced effect with a complication or cost, but the scene moves.

E) Destiny Points

You start with **2 Destiny Points**.

Each point spent can:

- give **+10** to your d100 roll, and/or
- give **-10** to an opponent's d100 roll

They stack, and you can do both in the same contest.

- Choose 10 skills; assign: **60, 55, 50, 50, 45, 45, 40, 40, 35, 35**
- Destiny Points: **2**
- Choose a Companion and a Bond/Friction
- Take Standard Kit for the genre

(Full detail is in Chapter 2, but this is enough to start.)

Step 2 — The Director opens with pressure

Use a strong opening that demands a choice:

- an ambush
- a deadline
- a moral dilemma
- a locked door and footsteps
- a chase
- a desperate negotiation

Step 3 — Put a Clock on it

Choose a simple 4-tick Clock:

- **Alarm**
- **Reinforcements**
- **Bleeding**
- **Escape**
- **Suspicion**

Tick it when rolls fail or time is wasted.

1.6 Starting Play in 15 Minutes

If you want the fastest path to the table:

Step 1 — Make a Protagonist (quick build)

- Pick a concept, Drive, and Line.
- Assign attributes: **70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45**

1.7 The Quick Combat Snapshot

Combat is a Contest: **Attack vs Defense**.

- Attacker rolls d100 vs **Melee** or **Ranged**
- Defender rolls d100 vs **Defense**
- Apply cover/aim/full defense as modifiers:
 - Cover: attacker -10/-20/-30

- Aim (spent action): next shot +10 (or +20 if perfectly steady)
- Full Defense (spent action): Defense +20 until next turn

If the attacker wins, roll damage die (weapon-based) and convert to wound tier using the combat chapter's procedure.

Important: In One-on-One, outnumbering is handled with grouping/pressure methods so the Protagonist isn't erased by "six perfect turns." (See Combat chapter.)

1.8 Your First Scene: A Ready-to-Run Opener

Use this opener in any genre by changing the skin.

Director reads or paraphrases:

You're in a narrow access corridor just outside the objective. The last barrier is a locked door. Behind you, something is coming—footsteps, boots, claws, servo-motors. Your Companion is beside you, tense and ready. You have seconds to decide: force it, bypass it, bluff your way through, or run.

Stakes and Clock:

- Start a 4-tick "Approach" Clock (they reach you when it fills).
- Any failed roll ticks the Clock by 1.
- Any loud action ticks it by 1 automatically.

Common approaches:

- **Security** to bypass the lock
- **Athletics** to force or wedge the door
- **Deception/Influence** if someone is on the other side
- **Stealth** to reposition and ambush
- **Companion Assist** for +10
- **Destiny** if the door is the mission line

This scene teaches the whole game: intent, approach, stakes, Clock pressure, and the value of Destiny.

1.9 A Short Example: Quick Start in Motion

EXAMPLE: "The Door, the Footsteps, the Spend"

Director: "Locked door. Footsteps are close. If you fail, the Approach Clock ticks and they see you."

Protagonist: "I bypass the lock—fast. My Companion watches the hall."

Director: "Security test. Rushed—Disadvantage –10. Companion Assist cancels with +10. Effective target unchanged."

Protagonist: "I spend 1 Destiny for +10 anyway. This matters."

Director: "Roll."

Protagonist: "I succeed."

Director: "Door clicks open. You slip inside. The Clock pauses—but you hear the footsteps stop at the door behind you. New scene, new pressure."

1.10 What to Read Next

If you're ready to play, proceed in this order:

1. **Chapter 2: Character Creation**
2. **Chapter 3: The Core Resolution Loop (Play-Facing)**
3. **Chapter 5: The Companion**
4. **Chapter 6: Combat & Defense Loop**
5. **Chapter 7: Wounds & Stacking**

If you prefer to learn as you play, you can start after Chapter 2 and reference the rest as needed.

CHAPTER 2: CHARACTER CREATION (GENERIC, ANY GENRE)

Character creation in One-on-One is built to be **fast, portable, and expandable**. You can make a fully playable Protagonist in 10–20 minutes, then refine over time as your campaign grows.

This chapter is **generic** on purpose. Genre modules add archetypes, powers, specialized gear, and setting-specific skill lists—but the process below remains valid in every genre.

2.1 What You Make in One-on-One

You will create:

- **The Protagonist:** the single player character and central figure
- **The Companion:** always present, always participating
- A small set of anchors that keep One-on-One play sharp:
 - **Concept**
 - **Drive**
 - **Line**
 - **Bond** (Companion tie)
 - **Friction** (Companion tension)

These are not “flavor.” They are the structure that keeps the game moving when you’re unsure what to do next.

2.2 Step 1 — Concept, Drive, and Line

Write three short statements.

Concept (Who you are)

One sentence. Examples:

- “A disgraced knight hunting the truth behind my order’s betrayal.”
- “An investigative journalist who won’t stop digging.”
- “A starport courier with a stolen key and no safe port.”

Drive (What you want badly)

One sentence. Examples:

- “Clear my name and reclaim my oath.”
- “Expose the conspiracy and protect my source.”
- “Pay off my debt before they take my Companion.”

Line (What you won’t do)

One sentence. Examples:

- “I won’t harm children.”
- “I won’t abandon someone who trusts me.”
- “I won’t kneel to the people who ruined my life.”

Director Tip: In One-on-One, Lines create strong scenes. Present temptations that test the Line without forcing a break.

2.3 Step 2 — Choose a Skill Set (Your Base List)

Choose the genre skill set that best matches your campaign’s starting tone:

- **Medieval/Fantasy**
- **Modern**
- **Futuristic / Science-Fantasy**

This choice does not trap you. You can still learn skills from other lists later; mixed-genre

campaigns are supported. The system remains the same.

Compatibility rule: If a skill exists in multiple lists, treat them as the same skill unless a module explicitly marks one as Specialist or uniquely different.

2.4 Step 3 — Attributes (Universal, Percentile)

Attributes are always **percentile values**. Roll d100 ≤ attribute to succeed.

Settings may rename attributes (for tone), but the mechanics never change.

The Six Attributes

- **Might (MGT):** raw strength, forcing, lifting, melee force, intimidation by physical presence
- **Grace (GRC):** agility, reflex, balance, fine movement, precision under motion
- **Endurance (END):** stamina, pain tolerance, resisting exhaustion and harsh conditions
- **Awareness (AWR):** noticing danger, reading space, sensing ambush, reacting quickly
- **Intellect (INT):** reasoning, memory, analysis, planning, technical comprehension
- **Presence (PRE):** composure, confidence, persuasion tone, deception poise, command weight

Assign Attribute Scores (Starter Default)

Distribute these six numbers among the attributes: **70, 65, 60, 55, 50, 45**

This creates a capable Protagonist without long math.

Director Tip: If your campaign is meant to be harsh and gritty, reduce the array by 5 across the board. If it is heroic, increase the array by 5 across the board. (Do this only as a campaign-wide dial.)

2.5 Step 4 — Skills (Percentile)

Skills are what you do. They are rated as % and rolled on d100.

Starter Skill Build

1. Choose **10 skills** from your chosen genre list.
2. Assign these values among them:
60, 55, 50, 50, 45, 45, 40, 40, 35, 35
3. Any normal skill you do not choose is treated as **20%** if it becomes relevant.

What a Skill Roll Means

A skill roll is one meaningful attempt. The Director should not call for multiple rolls for the same action unless:

- time passes under pressure
- circumstances change
- the Protagonist tries a new approach

Skill Ownership in One-on-One

Because you are one character, you are allowed to be broadly competent. Your Companion and gear cover additional gaps, and Destiny exists for turning points.

Common Misuse: Choosing ten combat-adjacent skills and nothing else, then expecting Destiny to solve every non-combat problem. Destiny is limited. Breadth is survival.

2.6 Step 5 — Specialist Skills (What They Are, What They Mean)

Some skills are marked **Specialist** in genre lists and modules. Specialist skills represent training

that is not plausibly improvised. They usually involve:

- dangerous systems
- regulated equipment
- professional procedures
- high-risk failure consequences

Examples (generic):

- Demolitions
- Surgery
- Advanced Piloting
- Deep Hacking
- Powered Armor Operation
- Ritual Engineering (in magic-forward modules)

Specialist Rule (Starter)

- You may start with **up to 2 Specialist skills** as part of your 10 chosen skills.
- If you do not have the Specialist skill, the Director may allow a desperate attempt only with **Disadvantage –30** and severe stakes—or may rule the attempt is not feasible at all.

Mixed genre does not waive training. If you find futuristic gear in a fantasy setting, training still matters.

2.7 Step 6 — Destiny Points (Start Low)

You begin with:

- **Destiny Points: 2**

Destiny Points can be increased through Growth. Destiny is intentionally limited: you are not meant to spend it constantly. You are meant to spend it at the moments you will remember.

Destiny Spend Reminder (Write This on the Sheet)

- **+10 to your roll per point**
- **–10 to an opponent’s roll per point**
- **Stackable**
- **Both can be used at once**

2.8 Step 7 — The Companion (Always Included)

The Companion is part of the system’s balance and part of the story’s heart. Every campaign includes one.

Choose a Companion Type

Pick an archetype-idea that fits your genre:

- Fantasy: squire, scout, familiar, priestly aide, bonded beast
- Modern: partner, handler, best friend, informant, K9, journalist ally
- Futuristic: co-pilot, drone, medic tech, ship AI avatar, scout bot

Define Two Anchors

- **Bond:** why they stay with you
- **Friction:** what they push back on

Write one sentence each.

Examples:

- **Bond:** “She saved my life during the purge; I owe her everything.”
- **Friction:** “He wants justice; I want revenge.”

Companion Mechanics (Starter Reminder)

The Companion acts through three universal actions:

- **Assist:** +10 to one Protagonist roll when help is meaningful
- **Screen:** reduce pressure/outnumbering by one step
- **Anchor:** delay a relevant Clock tick by 1 (or prevent one tick once), if fiction supports it

(Full Companion rules appear in the Companion chapter.)

2.9 Step 8 — Gear and Loadout (Starter)

You do not need a shopping session to begin play.

Take Your Genre's Standard Kit

Your Director will provide the baseline list for your genre (see Gear Access). Standard kit is what a competent person in that genre can plausibly have.

Then choose **2–3 personal items**:

- a token, tool, weapon, keepsake, photo, old badge, relic, notebook, charm, etc.

These personal items often become story levers.

Director Tip: Personal items are perfect hooks. Make one of them matter in session one.

2.10 Final Step — Write Your Core Numbers (Ready to Play)

Your starting sheet must include:

- Attributes (six %)
- Ten skills with assigned % values
- Destiny Points: 2
- Companion: name + Bond + Friction + Support block
- Wounds tracker (tier + Strain)

- Primary weapon damage die (chosen by the Director's genre profile)

Once those are on the page, you can play.

2.11 A Quick Build Example (Generic)

Concept: "A lone courier with a stolen key."

Drive: "Get the key to someone who can use it before the hunters catch me."

Line: "I won't sell out my Companion."

Attributes (assigned):

- Grace 70
- Awareness 65
- Presence 60
- Intellect 55
- Endurance 50
- Might 45

Skills (10 chosen):

- Stealth 60
- Ranged 55
- Investigation 50
- Deception 50
- Awareness 45
- Streetwise 45
- Athletics 40
- Security 40 (Specialist if the module marks hacking/locks that way)
- Medicine 35
- Survival 35

Destiny: 2

Companion: "Kite" (Bond: saved me in the alley; Friction: wants to go to the authorities)

This Protagonist can run stealth, chase, investigation, social pressure, and survive a fight—without needing a party.

2.12 Director Setup Notes (How to Support Character Creation)

A Director can dramatically improve One-on-One play by doing two small things at character creation:

1. **Ask one hard question about the Line.**
“What would tempt you to cross it?”
2. **Ask one hard question about the Companion.**
“What would make your Companion leave?”

Write those answers down. They are your campaign fuel.

Cross-References

- Core resolution loop: **Book I, Chapter 3**
 - Destiny: **Book I, Destiny chapter**
 - Companion system: **Book I, Companion chapter**
 - Wounds and stacking: **Book I, Wounds chapter**
 - Gear restrictions and standard kits: **Book I, Gear Access**
-

CHAPTER 3: THE CORE RESOLUTION LOOP

This chapter is the table procedure you will use constantly. It is written as a **how-to**, not a philosophy. When you are unsure what to do next, return here.

One-on-One uses **d100 (d%)** for nearly all meaningful resolution. The Director frames stakes, the Protagonist declares intent and approach, modifiers are applied through the **Advantage/Disadvantage ladder** ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$), Destiny may be spent, and the d100 roll decides the outcome. In contests, quality is judged using **Degree of Success/Failure (DoS/DoF)**, including the rule that mutual failure produces a **Lesser Win** for the “least bad” result.

3.1 The Loop (The Only Procedure You Need)

Run this loop anytime an outcome is uncertain and meaningful:

1. **Frame** (Director): describe the situation and pressure.
2. **Intent** (Protagonist): say what you want to accomplish.
3. **Approach** (Protagonist): say how you do it.
4. **Stakes & Method** (Director): choose Test or Contest; state success/failure outcomes.
5. **Modifiers & Destiny** (Table): apply $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$; spend Destiny if desired.
6. **Roll** (d100).
7. **Resolve**: success/failure; Degree if it matters.
8. **Consequence** (Director): apply result; change the scene state.

If you can do these eight steps, you can run the entire game.

3.2 When to Roll

Roll when all three are true:

- The outcome is uncertain
- The outcome matters
- Success and failure both change the scene

Do not roll when:

- the action is automatic with time/tools
- failure would not meaningfully change anything
- the roll would only gate progress without adding tension

Director Tip: One roll should answer one meaningful question. If the question doesn't matter, don't ask it with dice.

3.3 What You Roll Against (Skill vs Attribute)

Skills

If a relevant skill exists, use it. Skills represent trained competence and are the primary interface with the game.

Attributes (Fallback)

Use an attribute when:

- the action is raw capability rather than training, or
- no skill clearly applies

Common Misuse: Rolling an attribute when the skill is obvious, just because the attribute is higher. The roll should reflect what the character is actually doing.

3.4 Tests (You vs the Situation)

A **Test** is used when the world is the challenge.

Examples:

- picking a lock under time pressure
- searching a room while someone is approaching
- climbing a wall in the rain
- treating a wound with limited supplies
- convincing an undecided NPC (when they aren't actively resisting)

Test Procedure

1. Choose the best skill/attribute.
2. Apply modifiers ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$).
3. Protagonist may spend Destiny if desired.
4. Roll $d100 \leq \text{target} = \text{success}$.
5. Apply the stakes.

“Yes, But” and “No, But”

Tests are the cleanest place to use partial outcomes, without changing mechanics:

- **Yes, but:** success occurs, and a Clock ticks or a complication appears.
- **No, but:** failure occurs, but you still learn something / get partial progress—at a cost.

These are story applications of the same result, not alternate rules.

Director Tip: If the scene is under pressure, let success still cost time. If the scene is about competence, let failure still teach something.

3.5 Contests (You vs an Active Opponent)

A **Contest** is used when someone is actively resisting you.

Examples:

- combat (attack vs defense)
- grapples
- chases
- stealth vs an alert guard
- interrogation vs resistance
- negotiation where both sides push and refuse

Contest Procedure

1. Both sides choose a relevant skill/attribute.
2. Apply modifiers ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$).
3. Protagonist may spend Destiny:
 - +10 per point to themselves
 - -10 per point to the opponent
 - stackable; both can be done at once
4. Both roll $d100$.
5. Resolve using the contest outcome rules.

3.6 Contest Outcome Rules

In a Contest:

A) If one succeeds and the other fails

- The successful side wins decisively.

B) If both succeed

- Compare **Degree of Success (DoS)**. Higher DoS wins.

C) If both fail (Mutual Failure)

- Compare **Degree of Failure (DoF)**. Lower DoF wins.
- The winner gains a **Lesser Win**.

Lesser Win (Definition):

A reduced, messy, incomplete, or costly version of victory that still advances the scene.

Common Lesser Win forms:

- you achieve the goal but expose yourself
- you achieve it but lose time
- you gain position but not damage
- you get it, but it breaks
- you escape, but leave evidence behind
- you win the exchange, but suffer a complication

Director Tip: A Lesser Win should feel like scraping by, not dominating.

3.7 Degree of Success / Failure (DoS / DoF)

Degree is used when quality matters.

How to calculate

- **DoS = Target – Roll** (only on a success)
- **DoF = Roll – Target** (only on a failure)

Degree is typically used for:

- deciding a winner when both succeed in a contest
- determining the “least bad” result in mutual failure
- combat edge (damage conversion)
- speed and completeness under pressure

Common Misuse: Computing Degree for every roll. Only compute it when it changes what happens next.

3.8 The Advantage / Disadvantage Ladder

One-on-One expresses circumstances through a simple ladder:

- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** –10 / –20 / –30

Apply to the target number (skill or attribute) before rolling.

Typical Advantage sources

- good tools (+10)
- excellent tools + preparation (+20)
- perfect setup / superior position / strong leverage (+30)
- Companion **Assist** (+10)

Typical Disadvantage sources

- darkness, smoke, noise, crowding (–10 to –20)
- rushed timing or unstable footing (–10)
- severe visibility/terrain problems (–20 to –30)
- being wounded and attempting relevant actions (tier penalties)
- inferior gear or improvised tools (–10 to –20)

Director Tip: Prefer one clear modifier that captures the situation rather than stacking many small ones.

3.9 Destiny Points (Spend Before Resolution)

Destiny Points are the Protagonist’s limited turning-point resource.

What Destiny does

Each Destiny Point spent can:

- give +10 to the Protagonist's d100 roll, and/or
- give -10 to an opponent's d100 roll

They are stackable, and both can be used at once.

When Destiny is declared

After the Director states the roll and stakes, and before the results are finalized.

Protagonist Tip: Destiny is not for “nice to have” rolls. Destiny is for the rolls that decide who you become.

3.10 How to Handle Repeated Attempts (Without Grinding)

If a Protagonist fails, they often want to try again. One-on-One supports this—but only when something changes.

A second attempt is allowed if at least one is true:

- time passes and a Clock ticks
- the Protagonist changes approach
- the Protagonist gains a new tool or advantage
- the opposition changes (new guard, new lock, new pressure)

If nothing changes, the previous roll already answered the question.

Director Tip: If a task is important but the scene shouldn't stall, convert repeated attempts into a Clock: each attempt is one tick and one consequence risk.

3.11 The Director's Stakes Rule (Mandatory Clarity)

Before meaningful rolls, the Director states stakes in plain language:

- **On success:** what changes?

- **On failure:** what changes?

This is especially important in One-on-One play. The player cannot lean on party discussion to infer consequences.

Common Misuse: Hidden stakes. If the Protagonist doesn't know what failure means, the roll feels unfair.

3.12 Example: Contest + Destiny + Mutual Failure Lesser Win

EXAMPLE: “Least Bad Wins”

Scene: The Protagonist and a rival both dive for a dropped evidence chip in a flooded hallway.

Director: “This is a **Contest**: your Athletics vs their Athletics. If you win, you get the chip and can bolt. If you lose, they get it and the Clock ticks.”

Director: “The floor is slick—Disadvantage -10 for both.”

Protagonist: “I spend 1 Destiny for +10 to me, and 1 Destiny for -10 to them.”

Rolls:

- Protagonist Athletics 55%. -10 +10 = 55%. Rolls 68 → **fail** (DoF 13).
- Rival Athletics 60%. -10 -10 = 40%. Rolls 44 → **fail** (DoF 4).

Director: “Both failed. The rival failed less badly—**Lesser Win**.”

Outcome: “They snatch the chip—but they slip hard, slam into the wall, and lose a beat. They have the evidence, but you have the lane. You can run now, and the Clock ticks once as they shout.”

This shows: Destiny matters, mutual failure doesn't stall, and Lesser Wins create forward motion with cost.

3.13 Quick Reference

- **Test:** roll $d100 \leq \text{skill/attribute}$.
- **Contest:** both roll; success beats failure; compare DoS/DoF.
- **Mutual failure:** least bad gets a Lesser Win.
- **Adv/Disadv:** $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$.

- **Destiny:** +10 to you and/or -10 to them per point; stacks.
-

Cross-References

- Destiny details: **Book I, Destiny**
 - Combat and edge conversion: **Book I, Combat & Defense Loop**
 - Wound penalties and stacking: **Book I, Wounds & Stacking**
 - Clocks and pacing: **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
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CHAPTER 4: DEGREE OF SUCCESS/FAILURE & ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES

This chapter defines two core tools that make One-on-One fast and consistent:

- **Degree of Success/Failure (DoS/DoF):** the quality measure used when results need comparison or scaling
- **Advantages/Disadvantages:** the universal circumstance ladder expressed as ± 10 / ± 20 / ± 30

These tools do not replace the core resolution loop. They *refine it*—and they work identically in every genre module.

4.1 Degree of Success and Degree of Failure (DoS / DoF)

What Degree Is

Most of the time, a roll only needs a binary answer: success or failure. Degree is used when the table needs a **how well** or **how badly**.

Degree is most commonly used for:

- deciding winners in contests when both succeed
- determining the “least bad” result in mutual failure
- scaling combat edge into wound outcomes
- judging speed, completeness, subtlety, or collateral risk

Director Tip: Only calculate Degree when it changes what happens next.

How to Calculate Degree

Degree is always calculated the same way:

- **On a success:**
Degree of Success (DoS) = Target – Roll
- **On a failure:**
Degree of Failure (DoF) = Roll – Target

Where **Target** is the final number after modifiers and Destiny.

Example:

You have Security 50%. The Director gives Disadvantage –10, so your target is 40%.

- You roll 22 → success. $DoS = 40 - 22 = 18$
- You roll 77 → failure. $DoF = 77 - 40 = 37$

How Degree Is Used in Contests

In a **Contest**, Degree is used to compare quality.

Both succeed

Higher DoS wins.

Both fail

Lower DoF wins a **Lesser Win** (reduced effect with complication/cost).

Common Misuse: Treating “least bad” as a full victory. Mutual failure produces a Lesser Win, not a clean win.

Degree as a “Quality Dial” in Tests

In **Tests**, Degree can be used to decide:

- speed (“you succeed quickly”)
- completeness (“you find everything” vs “you find the obvious”)
- subtlety (“you leave no trace” vs “you leave evidence”)

- collateral (“you do it safely” vs “you cause damage”)

This does not change the binary result—it shapes the consequence.

Director Tip: In pressure scenes, success can still cost time. Use Degree to decide how much.

4.2 The Advantage / Disadvantage Ladder

What Advantage/Disadvantage Is

Advantages and Disadvantages are the system’s universal way of expressing circumstances. They are not special dice rules. They are simple target adjustments:

- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** –10 / –20 / –30

Apply them to the target number before rolling.

Important: Advantage/Disadvantage is always applied to the **target**, not to the d100 result.

When to Apply Advantage/Disadvantage

Apply Advantage or Disadvantage when something in the fiction strongly helps or hinders the attempt:

- tools and kit quality
- time pressure
- terrain and environment
- visibility and noise
- positioning and cover
- emotional leverage and social context
- wounds and impairment (when relevant)
- preparation and planning
- opponent advantage (in contests)

Director Tip: You do not need a modifier for every detail. Pick the most meaningful circumstance and represent it with one clean modifier.

4.3 The Three-Step Ladder (How to Choose ±10 vs ±20 vs ±30)

Use these definitions to keep modifiers consistent at your table:

Advantage +10: Helpful

You have a relevant benefit, but the situation still has risk.

- proper tools
- decent plan
- routine favorable conditions
- Companion **Assist** (standard)

Advantage +20: Strongly Favorable

You are set up to succeed unless something goes wrong.

- excellent tools + preparation
- superior position or leverage
- strong cover identity or authority
- target is distracted or compromised

Advantage +30: Overwhelmingly Favorable

You have near-ideal conditions; failure would be surprising and should have meaningful story explanation.

- perfect setup, perfect timing
 - opponent is helpless or completely outmatched *in this moment*
 - extreme leverage (hard proof, total surprise, flawless ambush position)
-

Disadvantage –10: Hindering

The situation is meaningfully harder, but still within normal risk.

- rushed timing
- mild darkness or distraction
- minor footing issues
- moderate stress

Disadvantage –20: Severe

The situation is actively hostile to the attempt.

- heavy darkness/smoke
- unstable ground, strong wind, moving platform
- poor tools or partial access
- opponent has strong advantage in a contest

Disadvantage –30: Extreme

The attempt is nearly impossible without a new plan or tool.

- no tools where tools are required (if the Director allows an attempt at all)
- overwhelming interference
- severe impairment relative to the task
- attempting a Specialist procedure without training (when allowed)

Common Misuse: Using –30 as a punishment. –30 is a signal: *this plan is bad*. Encourage a different approach.

4.4 Stacking Modifiers (Keep It Clean)

One-on-One remains fast when modifiers stay readable.

Default rule: Use one primary modifier that best captures the situation.

If the Director allows stacking, keep it short:

- rarely more than two modifiers total on a single roll
- never stack a long list of small adjustments

Director Tip: If multiple factors matter, convert them into a Clock or consequence instead of stacking penalties.

4.5 Converting Circumstances Into Modifiers (Examples)

Physical Examples

- Rain-slick rooftop chase: **Disadvantage –10** (or –20 if truly treacherous)
- Climbing with rope and pitons: **Advantage +10**
- Climbing with perfect anchor and time: **Advantage +20**
- Sprinting while carrying an injured Companion: **Disadvantage –10** (or –20)

Social Examples

- Negotiating with strong evidence: **Advantage +20**
- Lying to someone already suspicious: **Disadvantage –10**
- Intimidation while surrounded by their allies: **Disadvantage –20**
- Commanding under authority (badge, rank, known reputation): **Advantage +10/+20**

Technical Examples

- Bypassing security with proper kit: **Advantage +10**
- Hacking while being shot at: **Disadvantage –20**
- Repairing a vehicle in a workshop: **Advantage +20**

- Repairing mid-chase with smoke and sparks: **Disadvantage -20**

4.6 Destiny vs Advantage (How They Differ)

Advantage/Disadvantage is the **world**—conditions, gear, positioning, pressure.

Destiny is the **Protagonist**—a limited resource that bends fate.

They stack freely:

- You can have Disadvantage -20 and still spend Destiny for +20 (two points) to counter it.
- You can have Advantage and still spend Destiny to push toward a decisive outcome.

Protagonist Tip: Destiny is not “the same as Advantage.” It’s what you pay when conditions aren’t enough.

4.7 Degree and Modifiers in One Contest

EXAMPLE: “Two Successes, Better Degree Wins”

Scene: You try to snatch a keyring from a guard’s belt without being noticed.

Director: “Contest: your Stealth (hands) vs his Awareness.”

Director: “He’s distracted by the argument—Advantage +10 to you.”

You: Stealth 60% → target 70%. Roll 48 → success. DoS = 70 – 48 = **22**

Guard: Awareness 55%. Roll 40 → success. DoS = 55 – 40 = **15**

Director: “Both succeeded. Your DoS is higher. You get the keys without him noticing.”

4.8 Degree in Mutual Failure (Lesser Win)

EXAMPLE: “Least Bad = Lesser Win”

Scene: You and a rival both leap for a ladder as the platform collapses.

Director: “Contest: Athletics vs Athletics. Failure means you fall with the debris.”

You: Athletics 50%. Roll 64 → fail. DoF = 14

Rival: Athletics 55%. Roll 73 → fail. DoF = 18

Director: “Both failed. You failed less badly, so you get a Lesser Win: you catch the ladder—**but** your shoulder wrenches and you lose your pack as it drops into the smoke.”

4.9 Quick Reference Summary

- **DoS (success):** Target – Roll
- **DoF (failure):** Roll – Target
- **Both succeed (contest):** higher DoS wins
- **Both fail (contest):** lower DoF wins a Lesser Win
- **Advantage:** +10 / +20 / +30
- **Disadvantage:** –10 / –20 / –30
- **Keep modifiers clean** (one main modifier; avoid stacks)

Cross-References

- Core loop and stakes rule: **Book I, Chapter 3**
- Destiny rules: **Book I, Destiny**

- Combat edge and wound conversion:
Book I, Combat & Defense Loop

- Wound penalties: **Book I, Wounds & Stacking**
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CHAPTER 5: DESTINY

Destiny Points are the Protagonist's limited ability to bend key moments. They are not a replacement for planning, skill, or good play. They are a **turning-point resource**: when the stakes are real and the outcome will change the direction of the story, Destiny lets the Protagonist push.

Destiny works the same way in every genre and every module.

5.1 What Destiny Is

Destiny represents the Protagonist's narrative momentum—luck, grit, fate, preparation, instinct, or sheer will. It is the one rule in One-on-One that exists primarily to support the realities of single-player adventure:

- sometimes the Protagonist must take a risk alone
- sometimes a single roll decides whether the story continues
- sometimes the Companion's safety depends on one decision right now

Destiny exists so those moments feel dramatic and fair without changing the core engine.

5.2 Starting Destiny and Destiny Maximum

Starting Destiny

A new Protagonist begins with:

- **Destiny Points: 2**

Destiny Maximum

A Protagonist also has a **Destiny Maximum** (their cap). At the start of play, the cap is the same as their current Destiny:

- **Destiny Max: 2**

Destiny Maximum can be increased through Growth (see Advancement / Growth).

5.3 Spending Destiny (The Only Destiny Rule You Need)

Destiny can be spent on **any d100 roll involving the Protagonist**, including:

- skill tests
- attribute tests
- contests (including combat)
- chase rolls
- resistance contests
- social contests

Each Destiny Point spent may do one of the following:

- **+10** to the Protagonist's roll target (per point), and/or
- **-10** to an opponent's roll target (per point)

Destiny stacks freely:

- multiple points can be spent for larger effects
- both effects can be used at once on the same contest

Example (stacking):

You spend 3 Destiny on yourself → **+30** to your target.

You spend 2 Destiny against the opponent → **-20** to their target.

Both apply at the same time if declared.

5.4 When Destiny Is Declared

Destiny is declared **after** the Director states the roll and stakes and **before** the outcome is finalized.

This timing matters:

- the Protagonist knows what the roll is for
- the Protagonist knows what failure means
- the Protagonist chooses whether this is “a Destiny moment”

Common Misuse: Spending Destiny after seeing the outcome. Destiny is a decision under pressure, not a rewind.

5.5 Destiny and the Modifier Ladder (How They Combine)

Destiny is not Advantage. Destiny is not gear. Destiny is not cover.

- **Advantages/Disadvantages** reflect the world: tools, conditions, terrain, leverage.
- **Destiny** reflects the Protagonist: the choice to push fate.

They stack normally.

Example:

You have Disadvantage –20 from darkness and smoke.

You spend 2 Destiny for +20.

Your final target returns to its base value.

5.6 What Destiny Can and Cannot Do

Destiny CAN:

- turn a near miss into a success
- push a contested exchange in your favor
- cancel harsh circumstances at a key moment
- force an opponent’s odds downward when it matters most
- support heroic choices without rewriting the system

Destiny CANNOT:

- make an impossible action possible if the Director rules the attempt is not feasible
- remove consequences that already happened
- negate training requirements for Specialist skills
- ignore gear access or licensing restrictions (unless the story grants access first)

Director Tip: Destiny should not bypass the world’s logic. It should intensify decisive moments within it.

5.7 Destiny in Combat

Combat is a contest (Attack vs Defense). Destiny works exactly the same way:

- Spend Destiny to give yourself **+10 per point** to your attack/defense target.
- Spend Destiny to give your opponent **–10 per point** to their attack/defense target.
- You may do both in the same exchange.

Protagonist Tip: In One-on-One combat, Destiny is often best spent to avoid a catastrophic wound, to land a disabling hit, or to escape a losing position.

5.8 Destiny in Mutual Failure (Least Bad Still Matters)

Destiny matters even when both parties fail. Because mutual failure is resolved by **Degree of Failure (DoF)**, shifting targets can shift who is “least bad.”

If both fail:

- the side with the lower DoF gets a **Lesser Win**

Destiny can be the difference between “you scrape the win” and “you lose the moment.”

5.9 Destiny Refresh and Recovery (Starter Rule)

Destiny is limited. It should not feel infinite. It should also not feel so rare that the Protagonist never uses it.

In starter rules:

- Destiny refresh is handled through **Growth milestones** and **Downtime actions** as defined in Advancement/Downtime procedures.
- Some scenes may also refresh Destiny when the Director deems it appropriate to pacing (for example, after a major story beat or meaningful bond development), but the Director should keep this consistent and not treat Destiny as automatic “per scene” fuel.

Cross-Reference: Advancement / Growth defines increasing Destiny Maximum and refilling points. Downtime includes bond-building as a potential refresh lever.

5.10 Destiny and the Companion (Bond as Fuel)

Destiny is a mechanical resource, but it is also a story signal. In One-on-One play, the Companion is often the reason Destiny is spent.

Common Destiny triggers tied to the Companion:

- protecting them from harm
- saving them from capture
- choosing them over the objective
- preventing a bond-breaking consequence

Director Tip: Offer moments where spending Destiny feels meaningful, not mandatory. Let it be the Protagonist’s choice.

5.11 Destiny and Fair Stakes (Director Guidance)

Destiny functions best when the Director follows the stakes rule:

- state what success changes
- state what failure changes

If stakes are clear, Destiny becomes a meaningful decision. If stakes are hidden, Destiny becomes guesswork and feels unfair.

Common Misuse: “Gotcha” consequences after the Protagonist chose not to spend Destiny. Keep your stakes readable.

5.12 Examples (Destiny in Action)

EXAMPLE: “Stacking Destiny”

Director: “Security test. If you fail, the Clock ticks and the door locks down.”

Protagonist: “This matters. I spend 2 Destiny for +20.”

Director: “Apply it and roll.”
(The Protagonist pushes the moment without changing any other rules.)

EXAMPLE: “Destiny on Both Sides (Contest)”

Director: “Contest: your Influence vs her Resistance. If you lose, she calls security.”

Protagonist: “I spend 1 Destiny for +10 to me and 1 Destiny for –10 to her.”

Director: “Roll both.”
(Destiny becomes a clear decision: push your odds and pull theirs down.)

EXAMPLE: “Destiny + Mutual Failure = Lesser Win”

Director: “Contest: Athletics vs Athletics—both diving for the dropped keycard.”

Protagonist: “I’ll spend 1 Destiny for +10 to me.”

(Both fail.)

Director: “You both failed, but your DoF is lower. You win the Lesser Win: you get the card—but you slam your shoulder on the floor and you’re in pain as you scramble up.”

- +10 to you per point
- –10 to them per point
- Stackable; both allowed
- Does not bypass feasibility, training, or access rules

Cross-References

- Core loop timing: **Book I, Chapter 3**
- Advantages/Disadvantages: **Book I, Chapter 4**
- Combat and defense contests: **Book I, Combat & Defense Loop**
- Growth and Destiny Maximum increases: **Book I, Advancement / Growth**
- Downtime bond actions: **Book I, Downtime Procedure**

5.13 Quick Reference

- Start: **Destiny 2 / Max 2**
- Spend before resolution

CHAPTER 6: THE COMPANION

In One-on-One, the Companion is not optional. The Companion is a core pillar of play, present in every genre and every module. Mechanically, the Companion exists to:

- **support the Protagonist** without replacing them
- **create openings** in dangerous scenes
- **provide a fairness lever** in One-on-One combat and pursuit
- **carry story weight** through Bond and Friction
- **give the Director a personal handle** on stakes that aren't just "you lose HP"

A Companion can be a squire, love interest, partner, handler, pet, robot, drone, co-pilot, spirit, familiar, or something stranger. The name changes; the mechanics do not.

6.1 The Companion's Role at the Table

Who plays the Companion?

- The **Director portrays** the Companion: voice, choices, personality, fear, loyalty.
- The **Protagonist directs intent** in danger scenes: "Assist me," "Screen me," "Anchor the Clock," "Get out," "Hold the door," etc.

The Companion is not a second Protagonist. The Companion is a **system tool** and a **story tool**.

Director Tip: In One-on-One play, the Companion often becomes the emotional center. Keep them active, but do not let them solve problems that belong to the Protagonist.

6.2 Companion Anchors: Bond and Friction (Mandatory)

Every Companion has two anchors. The Protagonist player should discuss these and write them in plain language.

Bond (Why they stay)

Bond is what keeps them in the story with the Protagonist.

- "You saved my life."
- "I owe you."
- "You're the only one I trust."
- "We're family."
- "If you fail, everything I love burns too."

Friction (What they push against)

Friction is the tension point that creates drama and choices.

- "You go too far."
- "You don't trust anyone."
- "You keep lying."
- "You always choose the mission."
- "I'm afraid we're already doomed."

Bond keeps them close. Friction keeps them real.

Common Misuse: Making the Companion a cheerleader with no friction. That removes one of One-on-One's best engines for scenes that matter.

6.3 The Companion Stat Block (Starter Standard)

Companions are intentionally light so they don't slow play.

Every Companion has:

- **Support:** +10
- **Defense:** 40%

- **Signature Skill:** 50% (one skill appropriate to their archetype)

That's it. The Companion is not meant to have a full sheet unless your module chooses to expand them.

What Support Means

Support is not a roll bonus you add constantly. Support is the "justification label" that allows the Companion's help to become **Advantage +10** in a scene where their help is relevant.

If the Companion's archetype fits perfectly and the fiction is strong, the Director may treat their help as especially effective, but the core rule remains simple: **Assist is +10**.

6.4 Companion Actions (Universal, Always Available)

A Companion has three universal actions that work in every genre.

A) ASSIST (Advantage +10)

When the Companion provides meaningful help, the Protagonist gains:

- **Advantage +10** to one roll.

Assist must be justified in the fiction:

- calling out angles
- handing tools
- drawing a map
- providing a boost up a ledge
- distracting a guard
- stabilizing a wound during a desperate treatment

Limits (to keep it clean):

- Assist usually applies to **one roll** at a time.

- Assist is not automatic every round. The Companion must be positioned and able to help.

Director Tip: Say how the Companion helps. If it's not describable, it's probably not valid.

B) SCREEN (Reduce Pressure by One Step)

Screen is the Companion's "protect space" move. It represents the Companion taking risk, drawing attention, blocking lines, or interfering so the Protagonist isn't erased by One-on-One imbalance.

Screen effects include:

- reducing outnumbering pressure by one step
- blocking a lane or forcing a foe to reposition
- buying a breath when pinned
- keeping civilians off you
- forcing a pursuer to slow down

How to apply Screen (simple):

- If the Protagonist would suffer **Disadvantage due to pressure** (swarm, pin, crossfire), Screen reduces that pressure **one step** (often from -20 to -10, or from -10 to 0).
- If a group is being run as "one threat," Screen can prevent the group from adding an extra pressure penalty this beat.

Screen does not guarantee safety. It changes the odds and the geometry.

Common Misuse: Treating Screen as "the Companion fights for me." Screen is not a second full attack. It is a tactical interference that preserves the Protagonist's agency.

C) ANCHOR (Delay a Clock Tick)

Anchor is the Companion's stabilizing move: holding a door, keeping a vehicle running, calming a witness, controlling panic, securing an escape route, or maintaining cover.

Anchor rule (starter):

- When a relevant Clock would tick, the Companion can **delay that tick by 1** (or prevent one tick once), if the fiction supports it.

This is intentionally powerful—but it requires the Companion to be able to act plausibly.

Examples:

- “Hold the door” delays the **Reinforcements** Clock.
- “Talk them down” delays the **Panic** Clock.
- “Keep the engine alive” delays the **System Failure** Clock.
- “Cover the tracks” delays the **Suspicion** Clock.

Director Tip: Anchor is best when it costs something: the Companion is exposed, exhausted, or separated.

6.5 Companion in Combat

The Companion can act in combat through the same three actions. In a fight, you generally choose whether the Protagonist's round focus is:

- direct offense/defense, or
- using the Companion to alter the exchange

Common combat uses

- **Assist:** +10 to a decisive attack or defense roll

- **Screen:** reduce outnumbering pressure or break an enemy's clean shot
- **Anchor:** hold a chokepoint so the “surrounded” condition does not worsen, or delay the “bleeding” Clock

Director Tip: Companions make combat feel like a story rather than math. Let them do meaningful things—but keep the Protagonist as the driver.

6.6 When the Companion Is Targeted

A Companion can be threatened, attacked, captured, or pressured. This is not cruelty; it is narrative clarity. The Companion is a stake that matters.

Companion Defense

If the Companion must directly avoid harm, roll:

- **d100 ≤ Companion Defense (40%)**, modified by circumstances.

The Protagonist can protect the Companion by:

- choosing a defensive approach
- using positioning and cover
- spending Destiny on rolls involving the Protagonist (not on the Companion directly, unless your module explicitly allows it)
- forcing contests that prevent the threat

Director Tip: If the Companion is targeted, state the stakes clearly. The Protagonist must know what they're choosing between.

6.7 Companion Consequences (What Happens When They Take Harm)

Companions should not be “immune,” but they also should not be a second wound track that dominates play.

In starter rules, Companion harm is handled as **consequences** rather than a full tier system unless a module expands it.

Examples of Companion consequences:

- separated
- shaken (won't Assist until reassured)
- injured (needs treatment; imposes time pressure)
- captured (immediate scenario pressure)
- compromised (cover identity blown; creates a Clock)

If you want to map Companion harm to wound tiers, you may do so using the same tier names, but keep it lightweight unless your campaign demands detail.

Common Misuse: Turning the Companion into a damage sponge. The Companion is not there to absorb hits forever. The Companion is there to create choices.

6.8 Companion Agency (Keeping Them Real)

The Companion is loyal, but not robotic (unless they are literally a robot—and even then, they have directives).

Bond sets the baseline:

- they will stay
- they will help
- they will risk some danger

Friction sets the fault line:

- they will argue
- they will refuse certain acts
- they may withdraw support if pushed too far

Rule of play:

If the Protagonist repeatedly violates Bond/Friction truths, the Director is allowed to impose consequences:

- the Companion hesitates (no Assist)
- the Companion refuses (no Screen)
- the Companion leaves temporarily
- a bond Clock begins ("Trust 0/4")

This is not punishment. It is the story responding honestly.

6.9 Companion Advancement

Companions grow with the story, but at a slower rate and with less complexity than the Protagonist.

In starter play, Companion growth is handled through:

- changes in Bond/Friction
- upgraded Signature Skill applicability
- expanded gear and access
- occasional "signature moment" permissions ("once per session, the Companion can Anchor even if not present—because they prepared the route earlier")

Full mechanical advancement options (if used) are defined in the Advancement / Growth chapter.

6.10 Director Tools for Companion-Centered Play

Director Tip: Use the Companion to clarify stakes

Instead of "you fail and nothing happens," pressure what matters:

- "You can save the evidence, or you can save them."

Common Misuse: Companion as exposition machine

Companions can provide insight, but don't let them solve mysteries. Let them point at the right door; let the Protagonist open it.

Great With: Destiny

Destiny is at its strongest when tied to the Companion:

- "I spend Destiny to catch them."
- "I spend Destiny to stop the shot."
- "I spend Destiny to keep them from being taken."

6.11 Example: Companion Actions in One Scene

EXAMPLE: "Assist, Screen, Anchor"

Scene: You're escaping through a service stairwell. The **Reinforcements** Clock is at 3/4.

Protagonist: "I sprint up the stairs and force the roof door."

Director: "Athletics test. It's heavy and you're winded—Disadvantage –10."

Companion: *(portrayed by Director)* "I've got it—go!"

Protagonist: "Assist me."

Director: "Assist gives +10. Roll at normal."

(The Protagonist succeeds and the door cracks open.)

Director: "You hear boots below—Reinforcements Clock would tick and fill."

Protagonist: "Anchor the Clock. Hold the stairwell."

Director: "Anchor delays the tick by 1. Your Companion slams the inner door, wedges it, and braces—buying you seconds to reach the roof."

This shows the Companion's three actions doing what they exist to do: create openings, reduce pressure, and keep momentum.

6.12 Quick Reference (Companion Summary)

- **Always present** in the campaign
- **Support:** +10 (justifies Assist)
- **Defense:** 40%
- **Signature Skill:** 50%
- **Actions:**
 - **Assist:** Advantage +10 to one Protagonist roll
 - **Screen:** reduce pressure/outnumbering by one step
 - **Anchor:** delay a relevant Clock tick by 1 (or prevent one tick once), if fiction supports it
- **Bond + Friction** define loyalty and tension

Cross-References

- Core loop and contests: **Book I, Chapter 3**
- Destiny timing and use: **Book I, Chapter 5**

- Combat multi-foe handling: **Book I, Combat & Defense Loop**
- Clocks and pacing: **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**

- Downtime bond actions: **Book I, Downtime Procedure**
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CHAPTER 7: CORE COMBAT & DEFENSE LOOP

Combat in One-on-One is designed to be **fast, readable, and survivable** for a single Protagonist—without turning the game into “easy mode.” The core is a simple contest: **Attack vs Defense**, resolved with d100 and modified by circumstances through $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$. Quality is expressed through **Degree** and converted into damage pressure through **Edge**, which then becomes **wound tiers**.

This chapter presents the full combat procedure, including cover, aim, full defense, multi-foe handling, and how damage dice convert into wound tiers using Degree.

7.1 What Combat Is in One-on-One

Combat is a sequence of **meaningful beats** under danger. One-on-One favors:

- clear stakes (“if you fail, you take harm / lose position / the Clock ticks”)
- tactical choices (cover, aim, withdraw, protect the Companion)
- forward motion (mutual failure becomes a Lesser Win, not a stall)

Combat uses:

- **d100** for attack and defense contests
- a damage die (d4/d6/d8/d10/d12/d20) chosen by weapon/attack
- wound tiers (Light/Medium/Severe/Critical) as the primary injury system

Cross-Reference: Wounds and stacking are formalized in Chapter 8.

7.2 Combat Round Structure (The Beat)

A combat round is a short exchange where everyone acts once in a meaningful way. The Director can keep rounds loose (“cinematic beats”) or precise (“everyone acts once”), but the action options remain the same.

The Protagonist chooses ONE primary action:

- **Attack**
- **Aim** (prepare a stronger ranged shot)
- **Full Defense** (survive the next exchange)
- **Move / Reposition** (gain cover, close distance, break line of sight)
- **Interact** (open a door, grab an item, activate a device)
- **Direct Companion** (Assist, Screen, Anchor—if fiction supports it)

Enemies act as directed by the Director.

Director Tip: In One-on-One, “Move / Reposition” is often the smartest action. Let movement matter.

7.3 The Core Contest: Attack vs Defense

Combat resolves as a **Contest**.

Step 1 — Choose Skills

- **Melee attacks:** roll d100 vs **Melee**
- **Ranged attacks:** roll d100 vs **Ranged**
- **Defense:** roll d100 vs **Defense** (or equivalent defense skill in a module)

Creatures and NPCs use appropriate skills or a simple baseline chosen by the Director.

Step 2 — Apply Modifiers (±10/±20/±30)

Apply circumstance modifiers to targets before rolling:

- cover, range, visibility, footing
- aim and full defense
- wounds (when relevant)
- pressure/outnumbering
- gear and positioning

Step 3 — Destiny (Protagonist Only)

The Protagonist may spend Destiny:

- **+10 per point** to their own attack/defense target
- **-10 per point** to the opponent's attack/defense target (stackable; both may be used at once)

Step 4 — Roll d100 for both sides

Resolve as any contest:

- success beats failure
- if both succeed, higher DoS wins
- if both fail, least bad (lower DoF) wins a **Lesser Win**

Step 5 — If the attacker wins, roll damage and apply a wound tier

Damage die → Damage Score → Wound Tier (see §7.10)

7.4 Cover

Cover is expressed as Disadvantage to the attacker (or equivalent Advantage to the defender). Use one clean value:

- **Light Cover:** attacker -10 (door frame, railing, sparse furniture)

- **Solid Cover:** attacker -20 (engine block, thick stone, heavy furniture)
- **Near-Total Cover:** attacker -30 (only a sliver visible; usually no shot unless the target exposes themselves)

Director Tip: If the target is truly not hittable, don't roll. Cover can make an attempt non-feasible until the situation changes.

7.5 Aim

Aim is a full action. You do not attack this round.

If you Aim, your next ranged attack gains:

- **Advantage +10** (standard aim), or
- **Advantage +20** if you have a stable position, time, and a clear shot

Aim is lost if:

- you must move violently
- your line of sight breaks
- the Director rules you were forced out of your firing solution (explosion, grapple, sudden cover shift)

Common Misuse: Aiming every round forever. Aim is a setup tool, not a permanent buff.

7.6 Full Defense

Full Defense is a full action. You do not attack this round.

If you choose Full Defense:

- you gain **Advantage +20** to **Defense** rolls until your next turn

You may make a short, defensive reposition as part of Full Defense if it matches the fiction (backing into cover, ducking behind a pillar).

Director Tip: Full Defense exists so a Protagonist can survive a bad position long enough to change it.

7.7 Range, Visibility, and Position (Quick Modifiers)

The game does not require precise range bands unless you want them. Use the modifier ladder:

Ranged pressure examples

- clear shot, reasonable distance: no modifier
- long shot, partial visibility: **-10**
- extreme distance, heavy interference: **-20**
- near-impossible shot: **-30** or not feasible

Melee pressure examples

- cramped space, poor footing: **-10**
- slippery ground, unstable platform: **-20**
- entangled / chained / half-grappled: **-20 to -30**

7.8 Multi-Foe Handling in One-on-One

One-on-One combat breaks when many enemies receive full, separate “perfect turns.” To preserve fairness and tactics, use one of these formal methods.

Method A — Group as One Threat (Recommended)

Run a group as a single opponent with:

- one attack contest per round
- a **Group Clock** representing numbers/cohesion (usually 4 ticks)

How it plays:

- Protagonist success reduces the Group Clock by 1 (or more on strong advantage), representing thinning, breaking morale, or forcing retreat.
- Protagonist failure advances the group’s pressure (position loss, Clock tick, or wound risk).

Director Tip: Group threats are excellent for “gang,” “pack,” “swarm,” and “squad” fights.

Method B — Two Active, Others as Pressure

Only **1–2 enemies** make full attack contests each round. Others impose pressure:

- Minor pressure: **Disadvantage -10** to the Protagonist’s relevant roll this round
- Heavy pressure: **Disadvantage -20** if truly swarmed, pinned, or crossfired

This keeps the scene readable and deadly without becoming arbitrary.

Method C — Terrain as the Second Enemy

Instead of extra enemies, increase threat through environment:

- chokepoints
- darkness
- hazardous footing
- crowds
- fire
- collapsing structures

Terrain creates modifiers and Clocks, not extra attack rolls.

Common Misuse: “More enemies = harder.” In One-on-One, more enemies often becomes “less playable.” Use pressure methods instead.

7.9 Combat Actions Beyond “Attack”

One-on-One supports tactical intent without a long action list. Use the core loop and call for rolls when the outcome is uncertain and meaningful.

Common actions:

- **Disarm:** contest Melee vs Defense; on win, impose a positional win or force the foe to lose weapon access
- **Grapple / Break Grapple:** contest Athletics/Melee vs Athletics/Defense
- **Shove / Throw / Trip:** contest Athletics/Melee vs Defense; usually a positional result
- **Withdraw:** use Move/Reposition to break line of sight, gain cover, or leave melee range
- **Protect the Companion:** take the hit, reposition, or force the attacker into a worse line
- **Use the environment:** kick sand, drop a shelf, slam a door (often grants Advantage or imposes Disadvantage next exchange)

Director Tip: If an action is meant to change position or options, reward it with Advantage/Disadvantage shifts rather than raw damage.

7.10 Damage: Dice → Damage Score → Wound Tier

One-on-One uses a simple conversion that keeps weapons distinct (through their damage die) while keeping the injury system consistent (wound tiers).

Step A — Choose the Damage Die

The Director assigns a damage die appropriate to the weapon/attack:

- light weapons often use smaller dice
- heavy weapons often use larger dice
- monsters and sci-fi weapons can use higher dice where appropriate

(Exact weapon profiles may be provided by modules; the conversion below is the same regardless.)

Step B — Calculate Edge (from Degree)

If the attacker wins the contest, calculate **Edge**:

- **If attacker wins with success vs failure:**
Edge = attacker DoS + defender DoF
- **If both succeed and attacker wins:**
Edge = attacker DoS – defender DoS
- **If attacker wins by mutual failure (Lesser Win):**
Default is **positional Lesser Win** (no damage).
If the Director allows damage, treat **Edge Bonus as +0** (see below).

Step C — Convert Edge to Edge Bonus

Use this table:

- Edge 0–9: +0
- Edge 10–19: +2
- Edge 20–29: +4
- Edge 30+: +6

Step D — Roll Damage and Add Edge Bonus

Damage Score = (damage die roll) + (Edge Bonus)

Step E — Convert Damage Score to Wound Tier

- Damage Score 1–6: **Light Wound**
- Damage Score 7–12: **Medium Wound**
- Damage Score 13–18: **Severe Wound**
- Damage Score 19+: **Critical Wound**

Mutual Failure Damage Note

If the attacker “wins” only by being least bad (both failed), the outcome is normally **positional**: drive back, force cover, disarm, gain distance, break aim, etc.

If the Director permits damage on such a Lesser Win:

- roll the damage die
- **Edge Bonus is +0**

This keeps Lesser Wins meaningful without turning them into full-strength hits.

7.11 Advantages and Disadvantages in Combat (Common Conditions)

Combat commonly applies modifiers through the same ladder. Here are standard, reusable examples:

Common Advantages

- **Higher ground / dominant angle**: +10
- **Target is distracted / exposed**: +10 to +20
- **Aimed shot**: +10 (or +20 if perfectly steady)
- **Target restrained / pinned**: +20 to +30 (depending on control)
- **Companion Assist**: +10

Common Disadvantages

- **Light cover**: –10

- **Solid cover**: –20
- **Near-total cover**: –30 or no shot
- **Poor visibility / smoke**: –10 to –20
- **Unstable footing / moving platform**: –10 to –20
- **Swarmed pressure**: –10 to –20 (use multi-foe rules)
- **Relevant wound penalty**: as per wound tier (see Chapter 8)

7.12 Example: One Exchange (Attack, Defense, Cover, Destiny, Edge)

EXAMPLE: “The Shot Through Cover”

Protagonist: Ranged 55%, Destiny 2

Antagonist: Defense 40% (declares Full Defense)

Situation: Solid cover (attacker –20). Protagonist aimed last round (+20).

Targets:

Protagonist target = 55 +20 –20 = 55.

Spends 1 Destiny for +10 → **65**.

Antagonist target = 40 +20 (Full Defense) = 60. Protagonist spends 1 Destiny against them (–10) → **50**.

Rolls:

Protagonist rolls 62 → success (DoS 3).

Antagonist rolls 78 → failure (DoF 28).

Edge: success vs failure → Edge = 3 + 28 = 31 → Edge Bonus +6.

Damage die d10 rolls 7 → Damage Score 13 → **Severe Wound**.

This shows: cover, aim, full defense, Destiny on both sides, Degree, Edge conversion, and wound tier output.

7.13 Director Tools for Combat Pacing

Director Tip: Combat needs stakes beyond “take wounds”

Add Clocks:

- reinforcements
- fire spreads
- hostage panic
- door closing
- vehicle systems failing
- ritual completion

This forces choices: fight, flee, rescue, or rush.

Common Misuse: Endless trading of rolls

If an exchange doesn’t change position, stakes, or Clocks, inject terrain or intention. Combat must move.

Great With: Lesser Wins

Use Lesser Wins to:

- break aim

- force retreat
- disarm
- knock prone
- gain cover
- separate Protagonist from Companion
- steal the objective

Cross-References

- Degree and modifiers: **Book I, Chapter 4**
 - Destiny: **Book I, Chapter 5**
 - Companion combat support: **Book I, Chapter 6**
 - Wounds, penalties, and stacking: **Book I, Chapter 8**
 - Chases: **Book I, Vehicle Chase Mini-Loop**
 - Clocks and pacing: **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
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CHAPTER 8: WOUNDS & STACKING

One-on-One uses **wound tiers** instead of hit points. This keeps harm meaningful, keeps fights tense, and supports the reality of single-Protagonist play: you can survive danger, but you cannot absorb infinite attrition.

This chapter formalizes:

- wound tiers and their standard penalties
- how wounds are applied from combat outcomes
- what “treatment” means in play
- how wounds **stack** when you are hit again while already wounded
- what happens at **Critical**

Cross-Reference: Combat determines the wound tier you take via damage conversion (Book I, Chapter 7). This chapter determines what that wound does to you over time.

8.1 The Wound Model (What a “Wound” Represents)

A wound tier is not only physical injury. It represents the total impact of harm:

- cuts, fractures, bruising
- shock and pain
- reduced mobility
- impaired focus
- bleeding, strain, and fatigue

The system intentionally compresses “lots of little hits” into a readable track that still escalates toward real consequences.

Director Tip: Describe wounds in fiction. The tier tells you the mechanical pressure; the description tells you what it looks like.

8.2 Wound Tiers (Definitions and Standard Effects)

Wounds are tracked as a single **current wound tier**, plus a **Strain Counter** (0 or 1) used for stacking (see §8.6).

Healthy

You have no active wound tier penalties.

Light Wound

Bruised, cut, strained, superficial burn, minor puncture.

- **Standard penalty:** **Disadvantage –10** to **relevant** physical actions
- **Narrative effect:** you’re hurt, but functional

Examples of “relevant actions”:

- [sprinting with a twisted ankle](#)
- [climbing with a sliced palm](#)
- [grappling with a bruised rib](#)

Medium Wound

Deep cut, cracked rib, serious sprain, concussion symptoms, significant blood loss.

- **Standard penalty:** **Disadvantage –20** to **relevant** actions
- **Narrative effect:** you can still act, but every action costs

Medium wounds are “the fight is changing now” injuries.

Severe Wound

Major trauma: broken limb, internal injury, severe bleeding, deep burns, serious puncture.

- **Standard penalty:** **Disadvantage –30** to **relevant** actions
- **Narrative effect:** survival and extraction become immediate concerns

Severe wounds push the Protagonist toward choices like Full Defense, retreat, or desperate tactics.

Critical Wound

Collapse-level harm: organs failing, massive trauma, catastrophic injury.

- **Standard effect:** you are **Down** (incapacitated or barely functional)
- **Narrative effect:** the scene’s defeat stakes trigger unless immediate aid changes the outcome

Critical does not mean “dead automatically.” It means the Director enforces the scene’s stated stakes: downed, captured, bleeding out, dying, or otherwise removed from control.

Director Tip: Critical is where you cash in the campaign’s tone. In gritty games, Critical often means “you will die without immediate care.” In heroic games, Critical may mean “you are out and the enemy gets what they want.”

8.3 Applying Wounds (When You Take Harm)

Most wounds come from combat through damage conversion:

- Damage Score 1–6 = Light
- 7–12 = Medium
- 13–18 = Severe
- 19+ = Critical

But wounds can also come from:

- falls

- fire
- explosions
- poisons
- environmental hazards
- vehicle crashes
- traps and machinery

When harm is not from weapon damage, the Director can assign a wound tier directly based on the fiction and stakes.

Director Tip: If an effect is “slow burn” (poison, radiation, infection), use a Clock that escalates into wound tiers.

8.4 “Relevant Actions” (How Penalties Apply)

Wound penalties apply to **relevant** actions—those clearly affected by the injury.

Examples:

- A leg wound applies to movement, sprinting, climbing, dodging, and melee footwork.
- A head wound applies to focus-heavy tasks, awareness, and fine judgment.
- A crushed hand applies to weapon handling, climbing grips, fine manipulation, and medical treatment.

If the action is not relevant to the injury, do not apply the penalty.

Common Misuse: Applying wound penalties to every roll no matter what. Wounds are meant to pressure choices, not to erase play.

8.5 Treatment

Treatment does not “erase” wounds instantly unless a module adds advanced healing. In starter rules, treatment does three things:

1. **Stabilize** (stop bleeding, prevent immediate worsening, keep you in the scene)
2. **Reduce penalties** (make a wound more manageable)
3. **Support recovery during downtime** (help you step down tiers over time)

A) Stabilize Under Pressure

If the Protagonist (or an ally) treats a wound during an active scene, it is usually a **Test**:

- **Medicine** (or genre equivalent) is typical
- tools (healer kit, first aid kit, medpatch) often grant **Advantage +10**
- time pressure or danger often imposes **Disadvantage**

Stabilization prevents the Director from escalating consequences like:

- “you pass out in 3 minutes”
- “bleeding Clock fills”
- “infection risk begins”

B) Treatment Does Not Replace the Need to Escape

Treating a Severe wound while still under fire is a high-risk play. Most often, treatment buys time; it does not negate the threat.

Director Tip: Be clear about what treatment can accomplish in the moment: “You can stop the bleeding, but you’ll still be at –30 until you get real rest.”

8.6 Wound Stacking

One-on-One needs a stacking rule that answers a common question cleanly:

“If I already have a wound and I take another wound, what happens?”

This system is designed to:

- keep tracking minimal
- ensure repeated harm matters
- prevent “paper cuts” from being ignored forever
- allow big hits to jump you upward immediately

What You Track

You track two things:

1. **Current Wound Tier** (Healthy / Light / Medium / Severe / Critical)
2. **Strain Counter** (0 or 1)

Strain represents accumulating stress and compounding injury that doesn’t immediately change your tier—until it does.

The Stacking Rule (Apply Every Time You Take a New Wound)

When you take a new wound:

A) If the new wound tier is HIGHER than your current tier:

- Set your current tier to the new tier
- **Reset Strain to 0**

Example: You are *Light*, then take *Medium* → you are now *Medium*, Strain 0.

B) If the new wound tier is EQUAL to your current tier:

- **Escalate one tier**
(Light→Medium→Severe→Critical)
- **Reset Strain to 0**

Example: You are *Medium*, then take another *Medium* → you become *Severe*, Strain 0.

C) If the new wound tier is LOWER than your current tier:

- Increase Strain by 1
- If Strain would become 2: reset Strain to 0 and **escalate one tier**

Example: You are Medium. You take a Light wound:

- Strain goes from 0 → 1 (tier remains Medium)

If you later take another Light wound while still Medium:

- Strain would go from 1 → 2 → reset to 0 and escalate Medium → Severe

This is how “small hits” still matter when you are already hurt.

Why This Works (Practical Outcomes)

This rule creates intuitive results:

- **Big new hit overrides the old state.**
Light + Medium = Medium
- **Same-tier repeated hits escalate fast.**
Medium + Medium = Severe
- **Small hits while already hurt eventually push you over the edge.**
Medium + Light + Light = Severe
- **The track remains simple.**
One tier + one small counter.

8.7 Critical Wounds and Defeat Stakes

When you reach **Critical**, you are **Down**. The Director applies the scene’s defeat stakes.

Defeat stakes examples (choose based on tone)

- **Captured** (wakes in restraints, mission lost)

- **Left for Dead** (survive with long recovery, but something is taken)
- **Dying** (requires immediate medical intervention)
- **Collapsed** (the Companion must extract you while Clocks tick)

Director Tip: In One-on-One play, “death” should be a declared possible stake, not a surprise. If the scene can kill the Protagonist, say so.

8.8 Wounds and Combat Choices (How the System Guides Play)

Wounds are not just penalties. They are signals that guide choices:

- **Light:** “Keep fighting, but be smart.”
- **Medium:** “Change position, use cover, consider retreat.”
- **Severe:** “This is now about survival and extraction.”
- **Critical:** “The story turns on rescue, capture, or last stands.”

This is why Full Defense, Aim, cover, Companion Screen, and Destiny exist. The wound system makes these choices matter.

8.9 Wounds, Clocks, and Consequences (Director Tools)

Wounds pair well with Clocks:

- **Bleeding Clock** (fills into tier escalation)
- **Shock Clock** (reduces options, forces retreat)
- **Infection Clock** (delayed consequence)
- **Exhaustion Clock** (Endurance failure escalates)

A Clock is often better than “take another wound right now,” especially for slow-burn harm.

Common Misuse: Applying instant wound escalation for every hazard. Some dangers are better expressed as Clocks.

8.10 Examples (Stacking in Practice)

Example 1 – Light then Medium

You are Healthy. You take a **Light** wound (now Light, Strain 0).

Later you take a **Medium** wound.

- Medium is higher than Light → you become **Medium**, Strain reset to 0.

Example 2 – Medium then another Medium

You are Medium, Strain 0. You take another **Medium** wound.

- Equal tier → escalate to **Severe**, Strain reset to 0.

Example 3 – Medium and “small hits”

You are Medium, Strain 0.

You take a Light wound → Strain becomes 1, still Medium.

You take another Light wound → Strain would become 2 → reset Strain to 0, escalate to **Severe**.

Example 4 – Severe, then Light, then Light

You are Severe, Strain 0.

Light wound → Strain 1 (still Severe).

Light wound again → Strain hits 2 → reset to 0, escalate Severe → **Critical** (Down).

8.11 Example: Wounds in a Single Fight

EXAMPLE: “The Spiral”

You take a **Medium Wound** from a hard hit. You’re at **–20** on relevant actions.

You choose **Full Defense** next round (+20 Defense), and your Companion **Screens**, reducing pressure from the two attackers.

You still take a **Light Wound** from a glancing blow. Because Light is lower than Medium, you mark **Strain 1** (tier stays Medium).

Next exchange, you fail to reposition and take another **Light Wound**—Strain would become 2, so Strain resets and your tier escalates to **Severe**.

Now the fight is no longer about “winning.” It’s about **getting out alive**.

This shows how the system naturally pushes the Protagonist toward tactical play and retreat when needed.

8.12 Quick Reference (Wounds and Stacking Summary)

- Track: **Current Tier + Strain (0/1)**
 - Tier penalties apply to **relevant** actions:
 - Light: –10
 - Medium: –20
 - Severe: –30
 - Critical: Down
 - Stacking:
 - New tier higher → set tier, Strain 0
 - New tier equal → escalate 1, Strain 0
 - New tier lower → Strain +1; if Strain hits 2 → Strain 0 and escalate 1
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Cross-References

- Combat and wound conversion: **Book I, Chapter 7**

- Clocks and pacing: **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
 - Downtime recovery: **Book I, Downtime Procedure**
 - Medicine and equipment support: **Book I, Equipment / Gear Access**
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CHAPTER 9: GEAR ACCESS (ECONOMY & AVAILABILITY BY GENRE)

One-on-One is built to run cleanly without a heavy economy subsystem. The default assumption is simple:

- If it is **reasonable and common** for your genre and your position, you can get it.
- If it is **restricted**, you need a reason: a contact, an archetype role, a license, a faction tie, or a story beat.
- If it is **unique or campaign-changing**, it is not “purchased”—it is earned, stolen, discovered, or granted as a consequence.

This chapter defines those assumptions for the three baseline genres and establishes safety rails for mixed-genre play.

9.1 The Gear Access Model (Universal)

Gear access is answered by asking one question:

“Would a competent person like you in this genre plausibly have this—right now?”

If yes, it is **Common**.

If maybe, it is **Controlled** (needs a reason).

If no, it is **Restricted** (needs story access).

Common

- widely available in the genre
- socially normal to possess
- low to moderate consequence if discovered

Controlled

- legal, social, or professional barriers exist
- accessible through contacts, paperwork, or proper roles

- discovery creates consequences, but not necessarily immediate disaster

Restricted

- tightly regulated, rare, or extremely dangerous
- requires authority, faction backing, military access, black-market leverage, or a module-specific permission
- discovery triggers escalation: alarms, arrests, raids, or campaign-scale heat

Director Tip: In one-on-one, gear access is best used as a story tool. Every restricted item is a hook: “Who did you get this from? What do they want?”

9.2 Standard Kit (Universal Rule)

Every genre has a **Standard Kit**: the baseline gear a competent Protagonist can reasonably start with.

Standard kit is not “best-in-slot.” It is:

- functional
- believable
- enough to begin play without shopping

Protagonists also begin with **2–3 personal items** that reflect concept and history.

9.3 Access Requirements (Universal)

When something is Controlled or Restricted, one (or more) of the following must justify access:

- **Contact:** a person or network that can provide gear
- **Archetype/Role:** your job or training gives you access (guard, medic, pilot, officer, guild member)
- **License/Clearance:** official permission or credentials

- **Faction Tie:** membership, oath, or allegiance
- **Story Access:** you recovered it, were granted it, stole it, or earned it

Common Misuse: Treating controlled/restricted gear as “a skill check.”

A roll can help obtain it, but access is primarily a **story permission**. The roll determines *how cleanly* you get it and what it costs.

9.4 MEDIEVAL / FANTASY GEAR ACCESS

Medieval/fantasy economies are shaped by status, guilds, religion, and feudal control. Most people do not carry “military-grade” equipment in lawful regions without questions.

9.4A Common Gear (Fantasy)

Widely available in most settlements:

- travel pack: cloak, bedroll, rations, waterskin, flint/steel
- rope, grappling hook (common in adventurer towns), pitons
- lantern/torch/oil, basic tools (knife, hammer, whetstone)
- simple weapons: knife, club, spear, staff, bow (region-dependent)
- basic armor (where culturally normal): padded/leather, simple shields
- basic medical supplies: bandages, herbs, needle/thread

Standard Kit (Fantasy):

- travel pack (bedroll, rations, waterskin, light source)
- rope (and/or basic climbing tools)
- one primary weapon + one utility blade

- simple protection (light armor or shield where plausible)
- small personal token (ring, charm, letter, medal)

9.4B Controlled Gear (Fantasy)

Accessible with modest barriers: guild ties, temple permission, militia role, or a trusted contact.

- quality armor (chain, scale) in regions where it’s regulated
- military bows/crossbows where controlled
- poisons and alchemical irritants (often illegal without guild ties)
- lockpicks and burglary kits (often suspect)
- warhorses, trained hunting beasts
- maps of restricted areas, noble seals, forged papers (requires contacts)

Typical requirements:

- **Archetype/Role:** guard, scout, knight retainer, guild agent
- **Contact:** blacksmith, fence, quartermaster, smuggler
- **Faction tie:** guild membership, temple oath

9.4C Restricted Gear (Fantasy)

Campaign-shaping or tightly controlled:

- full plate or elite armor sets in lawful lands
- siege gear, heavy crossbows, battlefield explosives
- rare poisons, assassination tools
- relics, holy weapons, cursed artifacts

- “spell-like” items and rare enchantments (module-defined)

Director Tip: If it changes the campaign’s power balance, treat it as story access—even if “money” exists in the setting.

9.5 MODERN GEAR ACCESS

Modern access is defined by law, surveillance, institutional response, and paper trails. “Having the item” often matters less than “being seen with it.”

9.5A Common Gear (Modern)

Widely available to civilians:

- phone/comms, basic apps, chargers
- flashlight, multi-tool, duct tape, basic tools
- first aid kit (civilian)
- everyday clothing suitable to environment
- personal vehicle (if concept supports it)
- backpacks, locks, simple cameras

Standard Kit (Modern):

- phone + charger + basic comms
- flashlight
- basic first aid
- small tool kit (multi-tool, tape)
- transportation access (car, rides, transit pass—based on concept)
- 2–3 personal items (ID, photo, old badge, notebook, etc.)

9.5B Controlled Gear (Modern)

Accessible with licenses, roles, or contacts:

- firearms (depending on locale and campaign assumptions)
- body armor (soft vests), tactical accessories
- high-grade surveillance tools (directional mics, advanced trackers)
- restricted entry tools (professional lock kits)
- specialized medical supplies (beyond basic first aid)
- “official” credentials and access tokens

Typical requirements:

- **License:** permits and legal compliance (campaign-specific)
- **Role:** law enforcement, security, military, licensed professional
- **Contact:** armorer, fixer, informant network

Director Tip: A modern controlled item often creates a **Suspicion** or **Heat** Clock the first time it’s used openly.

9.5C Restricted Gear (Modern)

Usually triggers immediate escalation if discovered:

- explosives, automatic weapons, heavy weapons
- suppressors (campaign-dependent), illegal modifications
- sophisticated intrusion kits (military-grade hacking suites, breaching charges)
- restricted chemicals, poisons
- false identities that withstand scrutiny (deep cover packages)
- high-end drones used for surveillance/attack

Restricted gear is almost always story access:

- stolen from an armory
- issued for a mission
- acquired through a dangerous favor

9.6 FUTURISTIC / SCIENCE-FANTASY GEAR ACCESS

Futuristic play is shaped by corporate control, port authority, sensor visibility, and scarcity in frontier zones. “Buying it” is often easy—**using it without consequences** is not.

9.6A Common Gear (Futuristic)

Baseline items a competent operator might have:

- comms unit, local network access, translation utilities (if setting supports)
- charge packs / power cells
- utility tools (seal foam, cutters, patch kits)
- basic scanner (short range), simple drones (non-combat)
- protective suit elements (filters, light armor layers)
- medpatch equivalents (basic stabilization tools)

Standard Kit (Futuristic):

- comms + charge packs
 - utility kit (patches, cutters, basic tools)
 - basic scanner
 - light protection (suit/armor appropriate to role)
 - one sidearm or tool-weapon (if genre assumes it)
 - 2–3 personal items (ID shard, old mission patch, relic trinket, etc.)
-

9.6B Controlled Gear (Futuristic)

Accessible with clearances, roles, or corporate contracts:

- restricted scanners (penetrating sensors, signal sniffers)
- combat drones and drone swarms (licensed)
- advanced medical gear (trauma rigs)
- ship-grade tools and access codes
- powered exoskeleton frames (industrial or security grade)
- energy weapons above basic sidearms (as defined by module)

Typical requirements:

- **Clearance:** port authority, corporate security, military credentials
- **Role:** pilot, security contractor, engineer, licensed medic
- **Contact:** quartermaster, salvage broker, black-market tech

Director Tip: Controlled gear often creates a **Detection** Clock: sensors see it, logs remember it, systems flag it.

9.6C Restricted Gear (Futuristic / Science-Fantasy)

Campaign-changing, heavily regulated, or dangerously destabilizing:

- military-grade powered armor
- heavy energy weapons, ship-killer hardware
- EMP devices, wide-area jammers
- forbidden biotech, nanite weapons, replication tech
- relic-tech artifacts (science-fantasy)

- portal/gate devices or aether engines (if present)

These are almost always story access:

- mission-issued
- recovered from ruins
- stolen from a vault
- granted by a faction leader

9.7 Getting Controlled or Restricted Gear (How It Resolves)

When access is in question, resolve in three steps:

1. **Permission:** Do you have a reason you could get it? (contact, role, clearance, tie, story)
2. **Cost:** What does it cost? (money, favor, debt, Clock tick, risk, obligation)
3. **Roll (if needed):** One meaningful roll determines how cleanly you obtain it.

Common skills used:

- **Influence / Persuasion / Negotiation** (talk someone into it)
- **Streetwise** (find the seller)
- **Deception** (hide intent, forge credibility)
- **Security / Hacking** (acquire illicitly; often restricted by Specialist rules)
- **Investigation** (trace supply chains)

Director Tip: A failure to acquire restricted gear should not be “you can’t.” It should be “you can—but it costs more, takes longer, or creates heat.”

9.8 Standard Kit Lists (Quick Reference)

These are short starter lists. Modules may expand them.

Fantasy Standard Kit

- bedroll, cloak, rations, waterskin
- rope, light source (torch/lantern), flint/steel
- knife + primary weapon
- bandages/basic herbs
- simple armor or shield (if concept supports)

Modern Standard Kit

- phone + charger
- flashlight
- basic first aid
- multi-tool + tape
- transportation access (car/transit)
- everyday protective clothing as needed

Futuristic Standard Kit

- comms + charge pack
- utility patch kit + cutters
- basic scanner
- light protection suit/armor
- basic medpatch or stabilization supplies
- ID/credential shard (or equivalent)

9.9 Genre Mixing Safety Rails

MIXED GENRE DOES NOT ERASE REQUIREMENTS

One-on-One assumes power scale is **one-for-one** across genres: a wound is a wound, a contest is a contest, and the same Advantage/Disadvantage ladder applies everywhere.

Mixed genre does **not** erase training requirements for **Specialist skills**, and it does **not** erase access requirements for controlled or restricted gear. Finding a powered armor frame in a medieval ruin does not make it “standard kit.” You still need training to operate it and story access to keep it.

Genre mixing changes the *skin* and the *tools available*, not the underlying discipline of the system.

Cross-References

- Specialist skill rule: **Book I, Character Creation**
 - Core loop and stakes: **Book I, Chapter 3**
 - Clocks and pacing (Heat, Suspicion, Detection): **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
 - Equipment libraries: **Book 0, Chapter 5**
 - Vehicle libraries: **Book 0, Chapter 6**
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CHAPTER 10: UNIVERSAL VEHICLE CHASE MINI-LOOP

Chases are a signature scene type in one-on-one play. They create pressure, demand choices, and resolve quickly without bogging down into grid movement or long turn orders.

This mini-loop works across all genres and all vehicles:

- horses and carts
- cars and motorcycles
- hoverbikes and drones
- boats and starships (at the “tactical chase” scale)

The loop uses:

- **Contests** (d100 vs skill)
- **Advantages/Disadvantages** ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$)
- **Clocks** for Escape and Capture
- **Lesser Wins** on mutual failure
- **Companion actions** (Assist/Screen/Anchor)
- **Destiny** for turning points

10.1 What a Chase Represents

A chase is not “move speed math.” A chase is a sequence of beats where:

- each side tries to change range and position
- hazards and terrain create risk
- choices determine whether you escape, are caught, or turn the tables

The goal of this mini-loop is simple:

- resolve the chase in a handful of rolls

- keep results readable
- ensure the Protagonist has meaningful options beyond “roll again”

10.2 Chase Setup (Director Procedure)

Before the first roll, the Director defines five things:

1) Who is chasing whom?

- Protagonist fleeing
- Protagonist pursuing
- both racing toward an objective

2) Range Band (starting distance)

Choose one:

- **Close:** immediate danger; one mistake can mean capture
- **Medium:** active pursuit; choices matter
- **Long:** pursuit exists but is fragile; escape is plausible

Range band is descriptive; you don’t measure exact distance unless you want to.

3) Escape Clock and Capture Clock

Create two Clocks:

- **Escape Clock:** usually 4 ticks
- **Capture Clock:** usually 4 ticks

Adjust for scene intensity:

- quick alley chase: 4/4
- extended highway pursuit: 6/6
- desperate rooftop sprint under fire: 4 escape / 6 capture (harder to fully escape)

4) The Terrain Profile (the scene’s “why this is dangerous”)

Pick 2–3 defining terrain features that will create modifiers:

- traffic, crowds, narrow alleys
- rain-slick roads, ice, sand
- tunnels, bridges, rooftops
- debris fields, docking bays
- asteroid field, sensor fog, debris rings

5) The Consequence Profile (what failure looks like)

State stakes clearly:

- “If Capture fills, they stop you.”
- “If you fail badly, you crash and take a wound.”
- “If you lose a beat, the Clock ticks.”

Director Tip: Always state at least one consequence beyond “the Clock moves.” Make failure feel real.

10.3 The Chase Round (Core Loop)

Each chase round is one meaningful beat.

Step 1 — Protagonist chooses a chase tactic

Pick one (you can rename these to match genre flavor):

- **Gain Distance:** pure speed; open the gap
- **Cut Off:** predict and intercept; take a smarter route
- **Shake Them:** break line of sight; force a loss of contact
- **Hide / Break Contact:** vanish into terrain, crowds, or sensor noise

- **Force Them Off:** ram, intimidate, create a hazard for them
- **Protect the Companion:** keep them safe, stable, uninjured, or unexposed
- **Take the Shot / Take the Risk:** attack during the chase (risky, high stakes)

Step 2 — Director chooses opponent tactic

The opposition chooses a response:

- match speed
- block routes
- corner you
- call ahead
- push you into hazards
- isolate the Companion
- open fire (if applicable)

Step 3 — Choose skills for the contest

Use the most fitting skill for the tactic and vehicle type. Common choices:

- **Driving / Piloting / Riding** (primary chase skill)
- **Athletics** (on-foot chases or mount handling)
- **Awareness** (reading terrain, reacting)
- **Investigation / Navigation** (predicting routes, knowing the area)
- **Ranged** (if taking shots—usually with strong Disadvantage unless stabilized)

If your skill list uses different names, use the closest equivalent.

Specialist note: Advanced vehicles (fighters, powered craft) may require Specialist skills in modules. The chase loop does not change.

Step 4 — Apply modifiers and Destiny

Use $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$ for:

- weather, traffic, crowds, debris
- vehicle quality and damage
- visibility or sensor interference
- injury penalties where relevant
- Companion actions:
 - **Assist:** +10 to the Protagonist's chase roll
 - **Screen:** reduce pressure effects (see §10.6)
 - **Anchor:** delay a relevant Clock tick by 1 (if fiction supports)

Protagonist may spend Destiny:

- +10 to self per point
- -10 to opponent per point (stackable; both allowed)

Step 5 — Roll the contest and resolve

Both roll d100; resolve as standard contest:

- success beats failure
- if both succeed, higher DoS wins
- if both fail, least bad (lower DoF) wins a **Lesser Win**

Step 6 — Advance Clocks and apply consequences

- Winner usually advances **their** Clock by **1 tick**
 - fleeing side advances **Escape**
 - pursuing side advances **Capture**
- Apply any immediate fiction consequences:
 - near miss, scrape, lost lane, damage, attention drawn, separation

10.4 What Each Tactic Does (Mechanical Outcomes)

These are not new rules—these are standardized outcomes so the chase stays consistent.

Gain Distance

- **Win:** advance Escape (or reduce Capture) by 1
- **Lose:** opponent advances Capture (or reduces Escape) by 1
- Typical modifier: traffic/crowds/weather impose -10 to -20

Cut Off

This is the “smart route” play.

- **Win:** advance your Clock by 1, and impose **Disadvantage -10** on the opponent next chase round (they're forced into a worse line)
- **Lose:** opponent advances their Clock by 1 (they anticipated you)

Shake Them (Break Line of Sight)

- **Win:** advance Escape by 1; if Escape completes this round, you vanish cleanly
- **Lose:** opponent advances Capture by 1; you are forced back into their sightline

Shake Them is strongest in dense terrain: alleys, markets, docking bays, forests, asteroid fields.

Hide / Break Contact

A high-risk, high-reward play.

- **Win:** advance Escape by 1; additionally, the opponent must spend their next round re-acquiring you (or suffer Disadvantage -10 on their next roll)
- **Lose:** opponent advances Capture by 1 and gains positional leverage (boxed in, cornered, or marked)

Force Them Off (Ram / Hazard)

This is aggressive control.

- **Win:** opponent suffers a complication (vehicle damage, forced detour, loss of position). Advance your Clock by 1.
- **Lose:** you suffer the complication instead; opponent advances their Clock by 1.

Director Tip: This is where crashes and wounds belong—when someone chooses a violent solution.

Protect the Companion

You choose safety over speed.

- **Win:** no Clock shift is required; you may instead prevent a complication from landing on the Companion or remove a pressure penalty next round
- **Lose:** opponent advances their Clock by 1 and the Companion is pressured (threatened, injured, separated, exposed)

Take the Shot / Take the Risk

You try to attack during the chase.

- Resolve attack as a normal contest (Ranged vs Defense), but the Director should apply **Disadvantage** (often –10 to –20) unless stabilized.
- If you choose this, you are accepting that your chase advantage may stall; the Director may rule that the chase Clocks do not change unless your shot creates a positional change.

Common Misuse: Turning chase into “combat with cars.” Chases are about position and escape/capture, not trading damage every round.

10.5 Mutual Failure in a Chase

If both sides fail the chase contest:

- the least bad result (lower DoF) gains a **Lesser Win**

In a chase, a Lesser Win means:

- you advance your Clock by 1 **but** a complication occurs, or
- you deny their advance **but** suffer cost, damage, or exposure

Common chase complications:

- minor collision (vehicle damage Clock tick)
- lost cargo or dropped gear
- increased attention (Alarm/Heat Clock tick)
- separation from the Companion (or the Companion is endangered)
- forced route into a worse terrain segment (next round Disadvantage)

This keeps chases moving even when both sides miss.

10.6 Outnumbering and Multiple Pursuers (One-on-One Fairness)

Chases can involve multiple pursuers. Apply the same one-on-one fairness principles used in combat.

Method A — Group Pursuit as One Threat (Recommended)

Treat all pursuers as a single opponent:

- one contest roll per chase round
- a **Pursuit Clock** representing their cohesion/coordination

Method B — Pressure Instead of Extra Rolls

Let only one pursuer roll the contest; others impose pressure:

- **Disadvantage –10** (minor)
- **Disadvantage –20** (heavy)

Companion Screen in Chases

Screen can reduce pressure by one step:

- -20 becomes -10
- -10 becomes 0

This might represent:

- the Companion firing to suppress
- dropping debris
- jamming signals
- shouting directions
- blocking a vehicle lane

10.7 Vehicle Damage and Crash Stakes

The chase loop does not require a full vehicle durability system. Use one of these simple approaches:

A) Vehicle Damage Clock (Recommended)

Create a **Vehicle Damage** Clock (usually 4 ticks).

- A serious collision ticks it by 1 or 2
- When it fills, the vehicle fails: stalls, crashes, loses propulsion, throws a track, etc.

B) Direct Consequence

If a crash is the obvious outcome, assign a consequence:

- “You crash: take a wound tier (usually Light/Medium), the vehicle is disabled, and the chase ends in a new scene.”

Director Tip: Keep crashes rare unless chosen. Make them the result of aggressive tactics, high Disadvantage conditions, or repeated mutual-failure Lesser Wins.

10.8 Companion and Destiny in Chases (Turning-Point Tools)

Companion

- **Assist:** +10 to a decisive chase contest
- **Screen:** reduce pressure from multiple pursuers
- **Anchor:** delay a Clock tick (Escape, Capture, Damage, Alarm) if fiction supports

Destiny

Destiny can be used to:

- push a near miss into success
- deny the pursuer’s success by lowering their target
- flip a mutual failure into a Lesser Win in your favor
- secure the last tick on Escape when the story hinges on it

Protagonist Tip: The best Destiny spend in a chase is often the last tick—when Escape or Capture is about to complete.

10.9 Example: One Chase Round (Contest + Clocks + Lesser Win)

EXAMPLE: “The Alley and the Sirens”

Setup: Range Medium. Escape 3/4. Capture 3/4. Rain and traffic: **Disadvantage** -10 to both.

Director: “They’re right behind you. If Capture fills, you’re boxed in at the next intersection.”

Protagonist: “I try to **Shake Them** by cutting into the market alleys.”

Director: “Contest: Driving vs Driving. The crowd makes it messy.”

Protagonist: “I spend 1 Destiny for +10 to me and 1 Destiny for –10 to them.”

Rolls:

Protagonist target returns to normal; rolls a failure by DoF 9.

Pursuers fail too, but worse (DoF 17).

Director: “Mutual failure. You failed less badly—**Lesser Win**. You advance Escape to 4/4, but there’s a complication.”

Director: “You vanish into the alley maze—escape achieved—but you clip a stall. The Vehicle Damage Clock ticks once, and your license plate is caught on a camera: the Heat Clock begins.”

Escape happens. The scene moves. The cost is real.

10.10 Quick Reference (Chase Summary)

- Set **Escape** and **Capture** Clocks (usually 4 ticks each)
- Each chase round:

- choose tactics
- roll a **Contest** (Driving/Piloting/Riding/Athletics, etc.)
- apply $\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$, Companion, and Destiny
- winner advances their Clock by 1
- mutual failure → least bad gets a **Lesser Win** with a complication

- Use **pressure methods** for multiple pursuers
- Use a **Vehicle Damage Clock** if needed

Cross-References

- Core contest rules: **Book I, Chapter 3**
 - Degree and modifiers: **Book I, Chapter 4**
 - Destiny: **Book I, Chapter 5**
 - Companion actions: **Book I, Chapter 6**
 - Clocks and pacing: **Book I, Clocks, Consequences, and Pacing**
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CHAPTER 11: CLOCKS, CONSEQUENCES & PACING

One-on-One lives or dies on momentum. With only one Protagonist, the game cannot rely on party debate, parallel scenes, or “someone else will cover it.” The Director must keep pressure clear, outcomes meaningful, and scenes moving.

This chapter formalizes three tools the Director uses constantly:

- **Clocks:** visible progress tracks that make time and danger real
- **Consequences:** the costs of failure (and sometimes success)
- **Pacing:** how to structure scenes so the session moves and the Protagonist stays in the decision seat

Nothing here changes the core system. Clocks and consequences are how you *apply* it.

11.1 What a Clock Is

A Clock is a track of ticks. When it fills, something happens.

Clocks represent:

- time pressure
- escalating danger
- growing suspicion
- worsening injury
- dwindling resources
- incoming reinforcements
- unstable machinery
- emotional collapse
- rituals, hacks, downloads, negotiations

A Clock can be visible to the Protagonist (“you can see the guards closing”) or hidden (“the system is logging your intrusion”), but the **stakes must be clear**.

Director Tip: In One-on-One, hidden Clocks are fine; hidden stakes are not.

11.2 Standard Clock Sizes

Use simple sizes so Clocks stay readable:

- **4-tick Clock:** fast pressure (ideal for starter play)
- **6-tick Clock:** sustained pressure (longer scenes, extended pursuits)
- **8-tick Clock:** campaign-scale change (rare in starter)

Rule of thumb: If you want the Clock to matter *this scene*, use 4 ticks.

11.3 When to Start a Clock

Start a Clock when:

- the scene needs urgency
- repeated attempts are possible and you want to avoid grinding
- consequences are cumulative
- the opposition is escalating
- the environment is unstable
- the Protagonist must choose between speed and safety

Common triggers:

- infiltration begins → **Alarm** Clock
- chase starts → **Escape/Capture** Clocks
- severe injury → **Bleeding** Clock
- negotiation with deadlines → **Patience** Clock
- hacking attempt → **Trace** Clock

- ritual begins → **Completion** Clock
- fire starts → **Spread** Clock

11.4 When a Clock Ticks

A Clock ticks when the fiction demands forward motion. In starter rules, the Director should use these consistent triggers:

Tick a Clock by 1 when:

- the Protagonist **fails** a meaningful roll under pressure
- the Protagonist **succeeds** but the situation remains costly (“yes, but”)
- time passes because the Protagonist takes a slower approach
- the Protagonist repeats an attempt without changing approach/tools
- an enemy action advances the threat

Tick a Clock by 2 when:

- the failure is severe and the stakes are sharp
- the Protagonist chooses a high-risk option and it goes wrong
- the opposition has a decisive advantage in that moment
- a consequence explicitly states “it accelerates”

Companion Anchor: If the Companion Anchors and the fiction supports it, they can **delay a relevant Clock tick by 1** (or prevent one tick once). This does not erase the Clock; it buys time.

11.5 What Happens When a Clock Fills

When a Clock fills, the stated outcome happens immediately.

[Examples:](#)

- **Alarm fills:** security arrives / doors lock down / pursuit begins
- **Reinforcements fills:** a new threat enters the scene
- **Bleeding fills:** wound escalates or the Protagonist drops (tone-based)
- **Trace fills:** identity is logged; Heat escalates; system locks out
- **Fire fills:** the route is cut off; smoke forces action penalties
- **Patience fills:** NPC refuses, leaves, or calls for backup

Director Tip: A filled Clock must change the scene. If it doesn’t, the Clock wasn’t real.

11.6 Types of Clocks (Starter Library)

Below are reliable, reusable Clocks. Rename freely to match genre tone.

Threat Clocks

- **Alarm / Suspicion / Heat / Detection**
- **Reinforcements**
- **Pursuit**
- **Hostile Attention**

These Clocks represent opposition awareness and escalation.

Hazard Clocks

- **Fire Spread**
- **Structural Collapse**
- **Radiation / Toxic Exposure**
- **Storm Front**
- **System Failure**

These Clocks represent environmental danger and unstable conditions.

Injury and Stress Clocks

- **Bleeding**
- **Shock**
- **Exhaustion**
- **Panic**

These Clocks represent the Protagonist's diminishing capacity.

Objective Clocks

- **Hack Progress / Download**
- **Ritual Completion**
- **Escape / Capture**
- **Negotiation Breakthrough**

These Clocks represent time-bound goals.

11.7 Consequences

A consequence is what changes when a roll fails, when time is wasted, or when a success is costly.

Consequences keep the game honest. They prevent "roll until you win."

Common consequence categories

- **Clock ticks** (most common)
- **Position loss** (worse cover, worse range, cornered)
- **Resource loss** (ammo, gear damage, supplies used)
- **Harm** (wound tier or escalation via stacking rules)
- **Separation** (Companion split, route cut off)
- **Exposure** (identity revealed, evidence left behind)
- **Narrative fallout** (someone is angered, a faction reacts)

Director Tip: Use consequences that create new decisions. "You fail" isn't a consequence by itself.

11.8 "Yes, But" and "No, But"

One-on-One strongly benefits from partial outcomes, but the mechanics stay the same. You still roll success/failure. The Director chooses consequence framing.

Yes, But (success with cost)

Use when:

- the Protagonist should succeed because it's a smart plan
- the scene needs continued pressure
- the opposition or environment remains active

Examples:

- "You pick the lock—**but** the Alarm Clock ticks once."
- "You convince her—**but** she demands a favor."
- "You escape—**but** you drop the evidence."

No, But (failure with forward motion)

Use when:

- stalling would harm pacing
- the clue/objective must still be found for the story to continue
- failure should change the *shape* of the scene, not halt it

Examples:

- "You don't find the hidden door—**but** you notice fresh mud leading somewhere."
- "You miss the shot—**but** you drive them into cover."
- "You can't bypass the lock—**but** you realize it's powered from the next room."

Common Misuse: Using “yes, but” to punish every success. Keep it for scenes under pressure. Let clean success exist sometimes.

11.9 Pacing the One-on-One Session (Director Procedure)

A strong One-on-One session alternates between:

- pressure scenes (danger, Clocks, consequences)
- recovery scenes (downtime, planning, bonding)
- discovery scenes (information and choices)

The Three-Scene Ladder (Starter Template)

If you want a reliable structure:

1. **Hook Scene (pressure):** immediate choice; clear stakes; a Clock starts
2. **Complication Scene (pressure + twist):** a reveal, betrayal, escalation, or obstacle
3. **Payoff Scene (decision):** confrontation, escape, negotiation, or sacrifice

Between these, insert:

- a short **breath scene** for the Companion to matter (Bond/Friction), gear checks, or planning

Director Tip: One-on-One fatigue is real. Insert breath scenes before the payoff.

11.10 Handling Repeated Attempts (Clocks as the Answer)

When the Protagonist wants to try again and again, do not say “no.” Convert it into a Clock.

Formal rule

If repeated attempts are reasonable but you want momentum:

- create a **Progress Clock** (how close you are)
- create a **Risk Clock** (what gets worse)

Each attempt:

- ticks Progress on success
- ticks Risk on failure
- time always matters; Risk may tick slowly even on success

Example: “Cracking the vault”

- Progress 4 ticks (open it)
 - Alarm 4 ticks (guards arrive)
Every attempt moves one of them.
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11.11 Combat and Chases: Clocks as Stakes Multipliers

Combat and chases already use contests, but Clocks give them purpose beyond attrition.

Combat Clocks

- **Reinforcements**
- **Civilians Panic**
- **Fire Spread**
- **Objective Escape** (enemy fleeing with the item)

Chase Clocks

- **Escape / Capture**
- **Vehicle Damage**
- **Heat / Detection**

Director Tip: If a fight feels like “two people trading rolls,” add an objective Clock. “Hold for four ticks.” “Escape before three ticks.” “Stop the ritual.”

11.12 Companion Integration (Pacing Lever)

The Companion is a pacing tool:

- **Assist** speeds resolution (one roll becomes more reliable)
- **Screen** prevents the Protagonist from being erased by pressure
- **Anchor** buys time when Clocks would otherwise end the scene immediately

Use the Companion to:

- create choices (“save them or chase the target?”)
- create tension (Friction scenes)
- create relief (Bond scenes)

Common Misuse: Ignoring the Companion until they’re threatened. Give them purposeful moments even in calm scenes.

11.13 Director Callouts (Common Misuse / Great With)

Common Misuse: “Nothing happens on failure”

In One-on-One, this kills pacing. If the roll mattered, failure must change the situation:

- tick a Clock
- worsen position
- create exposure
- inflict harm
- force a choice

Great With: Destiny

Destiny is most meaningful when Clocks exist. The Protagonist sees the pressure and chooses when to push fate.

Great With: Lesser Wins

Mutual failure produces a Lesser Win. Clocks give you clean “costs” to attach:

- “You get it—Clock ticks.”
 - “You escape—damage ticks.”
 - “You win the exchange—heat ticks.”
-

11.14 Example: Clocks in a Simple Scene

EXAMPLE: “The Quiet Break-In”

Director: “You’re inside the archive. If the **Alarm** Clock fills (4 ticks), guards arrive.”

Protagonist: “I search for the ledger.”

Director: “Investigation test. It’s dim—Disadvantage –10.”
(*The Protagonist fails.*)

Director: “Alarm ticks once. You don’t find it yet—but you notice dust disturbed near a false panel. New approach?”

Protagonist: “I open the panel and take the ledger.”

Director: “No roll. You learned the path. The Clock remains, so you choose whether to leave now or keep searching more.”

Failure mattered, the story moved, and the Protagonist stayed in control.

11.15 Quick Reference (Clock Summary)

- Use **4-tick Clocks** for most scenes
- Tick by 1 on meaningful failure, costly success, or time passing
- Tick by 2 on severe failures or high-risk choices

- When full, the stated outcome happens immediately
 - Companion **Anchor** can delay a relevant tick by 1 (if fiction supports)
 - Use Clocks to prevent “roll until you win”
-

Cross-References

- Core loop and stakes rule: **Book I, Chapter 3**
 - Degree and mutual failure: **Book I, Chapter 4**
 - Destiny timing: **Book I, Chapter 5**
 - Companion Anchor: **Book I, Chapter 6**
 - Chases (Escape/Capture Clocks): **Book I, Chapter 10**
 - Wounds (Bleeding/Shock Clocks): **Book I, Chapter 8**
-

CHAPTER 12:

ADVANCEMENT & GROWTH

One-on-One is built around a single Protagonist and a living relationship with a Companion. That means advancement must do three things at once:

1. **Reward forward momentum**
(choices, risk, and consequence)
2. **Support genre flexibility** (fantasy, modern, sci-fi, mixed play)
3. **Keep the game from inflating into numbers-only escalation**

Growth in this system is intentionally **simple, modular, and Director-friendly**. It does not change any established core mechanics: you still roll d100 for tests and contests, you still use Advantages/Disadvantages ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$), you still measure quality with DoS/DoF when needed, and Destiny Points remain the Protagonist's "push fate" currency.

12.1 Two Kinds of Growth: Permanent and Spotlight

One-on-One treats improvement in two categories:

A) Permanent Growth

Permanent growth changes your character sheet: higher skills, stronger attributes, new Specialist access, and higher Destiny capacity.

This growth is earned through play and reflects what the Protagonist becomes over time.

B) Spotlight Growth (Destiny Points)

Destiny Points are not permanent power. They are **spotlight control**—the ability to say, "This moment matters."

However, the system explicitly states Destiny starts low and **can be improved with growth**. This chapter formalizes that improvement.

Director Tip: Permanent growth should be slow enough that the Protagonist still fears danger. Spotlight growth (Destiny) is what lets them survive cinematic moments without turning them invincible.

12.2 The Growth Point (GP) Economy (Core Currency)

The core unit of advancement is **Growth Points (GP)**.

GP represent:

- lessons learned
- scars earned
- relationships forged
- techniques developed
- reputation gained
- adaptations made under pressure

The Protagonist earns GP through meaningful scenes and milestones. GP are then spent between sessions (or at safe breaks) to improve the character.

This system is intentionally lightweight: the Director can run it without spreadsheets, and the Protagonist can make upgrades without "build engineering."

12.3 How You Earn Growth Points (Three Play Modes)

Choose one of these GP award styles for your campaign tone. All are compatible with the core rules.

Mode 1: Milestone Growth (Recommended for Starter Rules)

At the end of a session (or major chapter), the Director awards GP based on story progress.

Typical award: 2–4 GP per session

- 2 GP: light progress, mostly exploration or setup
- 3 GP: meaningful progress, risks taken, strong scenes
- 4 GP: major turning point, victory with consequences, big emotional beats

Milestone Growth is clean and fast.

Mode 2: Objective Growth (Mission-Based)

The Director assigns 2–3 clear objectives. Each completed objective grants GP.

Example objectives:

- “Recover the ledger from the warehouse.” (1 GP)
- “Keep your identity hidden.” (1 GP)
- “Protect the Companion from harm.” (1 GP)

Typical award: 1 GP per completed objective, plus 1 bonus GP if the session ends on a major escalation or revelation.

Objective Growth rewards planning and focus.

Mode 3: Beat Growth (For High-Intensity Campaigns)

The Director awards small GP for specific “beats” that occur during play.

Suggested triggers (max once per scene each):

- **Risk Taken:** you attempt something truly dangerous (1 GP)
- **Cost Paid:** you accept a meaningful consequence rather than backing out (1 GP)

- **Bond Deepened:** the Protagonist and Companion relationship meaningfully changes (1 GP)
- **Antagonist Shift:** you meaningfully damage the enemy’s plan or power (1 GP)

Typical award: 3–6 GP per session, with a higher-growth campaign feel.

Director Tip: Pick one mode and stick with it. Switching modes frequently makes advancement feel arbitrary.

12.4 What You Can Buy With Growth Points (Permanent Upgrades)

Growth Points are spent on five categories:

1. **Skill Increases**
2. **Attribute Increases**
3. **Specialist Access**
4. **Traits (if your module uses them)**
5. **Destiny Capacity Increases**

Your starter rules can include all five, even if some modules emphasize specific ones.

12.4.1 Increasing Skills

Skills are the most common advancement purchase because they represent training and lived experience.

Cost: Skill Increase

- **+5% to a skill: 1 GP**
- **+10% to a skill: 2 GP** (*equivalent to two +5% increases; offered as a convenience*)

Limits (Recommended)

To prevent runaway inflation, use one of these limits:

- **Soft Cap:** skills above 75% become harder to raise
- **Hard Cap:** skills cannot exceed 95% without special story justification

Soft Cap Rule:

If a skill is **75% or higher**, +5% costs **2 GP** instead of 1.

This preserves the system's tension: experts become better more slowly.

Training Requirement (Optional but Strong)

To increase a skill, the Protagonist must have:

- used it meaningfully in play recently, **or**
- had access to training, study, or mentorship

This is not a barrier; it's a narrative hook. Training can become scenes, downtime, or Companion story moments.

Director Tip: Use training requirements to create content, not to block growth. "You can raise Firearms, but you'll need range time" is a gift—it creates scenes.

12.4.2 Increasing Attributes

Attributes change less often than skills. They represent deeper change: conditioning, maturity, trauma adaptation, confidence, insight.

Cost: Attribute Increase

- **+5% to an attribute: 3 GP**

Limits

- Attributes usually should not exceed **80–85%** in grounded campaigns
- High-power campaigns can push beyond, but the Director should expect tone changes

Attribute Growth Justification

Attributes should grow when the story supports it:

- Fortitude increases after months of survival pressure
- Presence increases after leadership and hard choices
- Awareness increases after repeated close calls and training
- Intellect increases after study, research, or exposure to advanced systems

This is not a strict permission gate—just a tone guideline.

12.4.3 Specialist Skills and Specialist Access

Specialist skills represent training that isn't "common competence." They are the skills you can't just wing reliably: piloting, surgery, high sorcery theory, demolitions, advanced hacking, ritual binding.

Each genre module may define additional Specialist skills, but the core rule is consistent:

What "Specialist Access" Means

If a skill is marked [**Specialist**], then:

- Characters without access can attempt it only at the Director's discretion, often with Disadvantage (–10 to –30) and higher consequences.
- Characters with access may use it normally.

Buying Specialist Access

- **Gain access to one Specialist skill: 2 GP**
(*This matches your established pattern of Specialist unlocks being a notable investment.*)

Director Tip: “Specialist Access” is the system’s genre glue.

It’s what lets fantasy magic, modern demolitions, and starship piloting coexist without becoming universal competence.

12.4.4 Traits (If Used)

If your campaign uses general traits or module traits, they should be short, permission-based, and not stack endless bonuses.

Cost: Trait

- **New minor trait: 2 GP**
- **New major trait: 4 GP** (*rare; usually earned through story*)

Minor traits should usually grant:

- a clear permission (“can attempt X without tools”), or
- a conditional +10 in a narrow context, or
- a once-per-scene narrative edge that maps to Assist/Anchor logic

Major traits often represent:

- bonded artifacts
- supernatural awakenings
- elite military training packages
- cybernetic suites
- deep magical pacts

12.4.5 Destiny Capacity

Destiny Points begin low and can be improved. Destiny is a spotlight resource, so its growth must be slow and meaningful.

Destiny Definitions (Reminder)

- Destiny can be spent to grant +10 to the Protagonist’s d100 roll per point.

- Destiny can be spent to impose –10 to an opponent’s d100 roll per point.
- Both can be done together in one moment, and multiple points can stack.

Destiny Capacity

Destiny Capacity is the **maximum Destiny Points** the Protagonist can hold.

Starting Destiny

The starter rules assume the Protagonist starts with a **low Destiny Capacity** (commonly **2 or 3**), reflecting a character who is not yet “story-forged.”

Buying More Destiny Capacity

- **Increase Destiny Capacity by +1: 3 GP**

This is intentionally expensive because Destiny is powerful and flexible.

How Destiny Refreshes

To keep Destiny meaningful (and not hoarded forever), use one of these refresh models. Pick one and stick to it:

Model A (Session Refresh):

At the start of each session, refresh Destiny to full capacity.

Model B (Scene Milestone Refresh):

Refresh **1 Destiny Point** when the Protagonist:

- completes a major objective,
- suffers a meaningful consequence willingly,
- or reaches a safe haven after danger.

Model C (Director Award Refresh):

The Director awards Destiny refresh when the story hits a “camera moment”—a reveal, a vow, a turning point, a sacrifice.

All three keep Destiny in circulation. Model A is simplest for starter rules.

Director Tip: If Destiny is never refreshed, it becomes fear currency.

If it's refreshed too often, it becomes routine. Pick a rhythm that matches your tone.

12.5 Companion Growth (Keeping the Duo Balanced)

The Companion must grow, but not at the same rate or in the same way as the Protagonist. The Companion's job is support and stakes, not dominance.

Use one of these methods:

Method 1: Echo Growth (Recommended)

Whenever the Protagonist spends GP, the Companion gains a small parallel improvement at key story moments.

Every 6 GP the Protagonist spends, the Companion gains **one**:

- +5% to one key Companion rating, **or**
- one new simple trait, **or**
- one gear upgrade appropriate to genre

This keeps Companions relevant over long play without doubling bookkeeping.

Method 2: Bond Growth

Tie Companion improvement to the relationship.

When the Protagonist and Companion complete a bond milestone (confession, shared victory, betrayal forgiven, vow made), the Companion gains one improvement as above.

Director Tip: Companion growth should feel like relationship change, not leveling.

12.6 Growth Timing: When You Apply Upgrades

Between Sessions (Default)

Apply Growth after a session ends, during downtime, or at a safe haven.

Mid-Session (Only at Safe Breaks)

If you end a scene at a clear rest point (camp, safehouse, ship quarters), the Director may allow a small upgrade—usually a single skill increase or Specialist unlock—if it fits the fiction.

Avoid applying upgrades in the middle of a chase unless the genre is explicitly “power surge.”

12.7 Growth Without Power Creep (Director Safety Rails)

Because One-on-One can mix genres, advancement must not break compatibility.

A) Keep Core Numbers in Range

A +10 is a meaningful swing in d100. Skills rising too fast will make many scenes auto-resolve.

Use the soft cap and keep most skills between 35–75% for a long time.

B) Use Complications and Clocks, Not Just Bigger Enemies

Growth doesn't only mean tougher Antagonists. It can mean:

- smarter enemies
- layered clocks
- political consequences
- moral traps
- environment hazards
- threats to the Companion

C) Let Growth Expand Options, Not Only Increase Odds

The best growth purchases are often:

- Specialist access that opens new approaches
- gear that enables new tactics
- traits that permit bold moves

Numbers matter, but options matter more.

12.8 Example Advancement Packages

These packages are examples of how a Protagonist might spend GP without turning the system into a build puzzle.

Package A: The Survivor (6 GP)

- +10% Fortitude-based survival skill (+10 total; 2 GP)
- +5% Awareness (+5; 3 GP)
- +5% Athletics (+5; 1 GP)

Result: More resilient, more alert, slightly more capable physically.

Package B: The Specialist (6 GP)

- Unlock one [Specialist] skill (2 GP)
- +10% to that Specialist skill (2 GP)
- +10% to a supporting skill (2 GP)

Result: A new method enters the character's toolkit.

Package C: The Fate-Touched (6 GP)

- Destiny Capacity +1 (3 GP)
- +10% to a core combat skill (2 GP)
- +5% Presence or Awareness (1 GP)

Result: More cinematic control without abandoning grounded odds.

12.9 Growth and Tone (Cinematic vs Gritty)

Growth is a tone dial.

Cinematic Campaign

- 3–4 GP per session
- Destiny refresh generous (Model A or B)
- Skill caps loose, but consequences still matter

Gritty Campaign

- 2–3 GP per session
- Destiny refresh earned (Model B or C)
- Soft caps enforced strongly
- Wounds and recovery take longer; danger stays sharp

Horror/Survival

- GP may come slower, but Specialist access and gear matter greatly
- Destiny refresh becomes story-critical and rare
- Clocks are shorter; scenes are tighter

Director Tip: Tell the Protagonist what tone you're running. Growth feels unfair when the player expects heroic escalation but the Director is running survival horror.

12.10 Quick Reference (Advancement Summary)

- **Growth Points (GP)** are earned by milestones/objectives/beats (choose one mode).
- Spend GP between sessions or at safe breaks.
- **Skills:** +5% = 1 GP (soft cap: 75%+ costs 2 GP per +5%).
- **Attributes:** +5% = 3 GP.
- **Specialist Access:** unlock one [Specialist] skill = 2 GP.

- **Traits (if used):** minor 2 GP; major 4 GP (rare).
 - **Destiny Capacity:** +1 = 3 GP.
 - **Companion Growth:** echo or bond-based; smaller, slower, and story-driven.
-

CHAPTER 13: DOWNTIME PROCEDURE

Downtime is the system's "between scenes" engine. It is where recovery happens, plans form, contacts matter, and growth becomes real. In one-on-one play, downtime is especially important because it:

- gives the Protagonist space to **heal** and **stabilize**
- creates meaningful choices that aren't combat
- strengthens (or strains) the **Companion** relationship
- turns resources and access into story motion
- provides a clean place to **spend GP** and justify training

Downtime is a procedure. Run it when a session ends, when the Protagonist reaches safety, or when the story naturally transitions.

13.1 When Downtime Happens

Downtime occurs when:

- the Protagonist is in a safe-enough location to breathe
- the current pressure Clocks are not actively ticking
- the Director declares a time skip ("hours pass," "a week later," "back at base")

Downtime can be short (a night in a room) or long (weeks of travel), but the procedure stays the same.

13.2 The Downtime Round (Core Procedure)

A Downtime Round has four steps:

1. **Set the Downtime Frame** (Director)
2. **Choose Downtime Actions** (Protagonist + Companion)
3. **Resolve Actions** (tests only when meaningful)
4. **Apply Outcomes** (recovery, Clocks, access, GP spends)

You usually take **2 Downtime Actions** per Downtime Round.

The Companion participates through the same core structure: their presence can justify outcomes and sometimes reduce risk.

Director Tip: Treat downtime like a montage with sharp choices, not a shopping list.

13.3 Step 1 — Set the Downtime Frame (Director)

The Director answers three questions:

A) Where are you, and what is the safety level?

- safe home/base
- temporary shelter
- hostile town
- camp in dangerous territory
- hidden safehouse with limited time

Safety level determines what actions are feasible and what risks exist.

B) How much time passes?

- a night
- a few days
- a week
- longer

Time passing can:

- reduce pressure Clocks
- advance antagonist plans
- make consequences ripen (Heat, Suspicion, Infection)

C) What Clocks exist in the background?

Common downtime Clocks:

- **Heat / Suspicion** (law/factions closing in)
- **Recovery** (wounds improving)
- **Debt / Obligation** (contacts demanding payment)
- **Project** (training, crafting, research)
- **Antagonist Progress** (their plan advances)

Director Tip: A single background Clock keeps downtime from feeling “free.” Choose one that fits the campaign.

13.4 Step 2 — Choose Downtime Actions (2 Actions)

Choose **two** actions from the list below. You may choose the same action twice if it makes sense (e.g., extended recovery).

Downtime Action List (Starter)

1. **Recover** (treat wounds, rest, stabilize)
2. **Train** (skills, attributes, Specialist learning)
3. **Resupply** (standard kit, ammo, mundane needs)
4. **Acquire** (controlled/restricted gear access attempt)
5. **Lay Low** (reduce Heat/Suspicion, clear traces)

6. **Research** (find info, study enemy, analyze artifact)
7. **Work a Contact** (gain favors, access, rumors)
8. **Project** (build/repair/craft/modify; long-term)
9. **Bond** (strengthen Companion relationship)
10. **Resolve Friction** (address conflict; prevent rupture)

Genre modules may add actions, but these are universal.

13.5 Step 3 — Resolve Downtime Actions

Most downtime actions do **not** require rolls unless:

- the outcome is uncertain
- the stakes matter
- failure changes the situation

When a roll is needed, use the normal system:

- Test against the relevant skill/attribute
- Apply modifiers
- Destiny can be spent (rarely necessary in downtime, but allowed)

Director Tip: Downtime rolls should never be “gotchas.” If you call for a roll, tell the Protagonist what failure means.

13.6 Downtime Actions

13.6A RECOVER

Use Recover to heal, stabilize, and reduce penalties.

Typical skills: Medicine, Survival (field care), or genre equivalent.

Tools: healer kits, first aid, medpatches often grant Advantage +10.

Outcomes (starter):

- If you are **Light**: Recover can step you to **Healthy** if time and safety are sufficient.
- If you are **Medium**: Recover reduces the situation so you can function; stepping down may require more time or repeated Recover actions.
- If you are **Severe**: Recover is urgent; you need safety, time, and treatment. Downtime may stop escalation and begin the long step down.
- **Critical** requires immediate story intervention; downtime is what happens after survival.

Strain Interaction: Recovery is the cleanest way to clear built-up strain and prevent “small hits” from spiraling later.

Director Tip: Don’t over-math recovery in starter play. Make it a consequence and a choice: “Do you rest and recover, or do you push while hurt?”

13.6B TRAIN

Training is how you justify skill growth and Specialist acquisition.

Typical skills: any relevant training frame can be justified through the story.

Rolls: only if training is contested or risky (rare).

Training supports:

- improving an existing skill (spend GP normally)
- improving an attribute (spend GP normally)
- acquiring a Specialist skill (requires training justification)

Training requirements (starter):

- You must have access to a mentor, facility, manual, or repeated field practice that makes sense.
- If training access is weak, the Director may impose a background Clock (“Training Interrupted 0/4”).

13.6C RESUPPLY

Resupply refreshes common gear appropriate to the genre.

If you are in a place where it’s plausible:

- replenish rations/ammo/basic supplies
- replace minor broken gear
- restore standard kit readiness

No roll unless you are in scarcity conditions or under Heat.

If scarcity or Heat matters, the Director may require:

- Streetwise / Influence / Survival test with consequences like ticking a Heat Clock or taking debt.

13.6D ACQUIRE (CONTROLLED / RESTRICTED)

Use Acquire to attempt access to gear that is not Common.

This is resolved using the Gear Access model:

1. **Permission:** contact/role/license/story access
2. **Cost:** money/favor/obligation/Clock tick
3. **Roll (if needed):** one roll determines how clean it is

Failure does not usually mean “no forever.” It means:

- higher cost

- delay (Clock)
- exposure (Heat)
- a new complication (“they want a job done first”)

13.6E LAY LOW

Lay Low reduces Heat/Suspicion and resets pressure.

Examples:

- change appearance
- leave the area
- destroy evidence
- bribe officials
- go off-grid
- silence witnesses (socially, not violently by default)

Typical skills: Deception, Streetwise, Influence, Security (covering traces).

Outcome: reduce a Heat Clock by 1–2 ticks, or prevent it from ticking during the next active scene.

Director Tip: Lay Low is a great downtime action when the campaign uses modern or futuristic surveillance pressure.

13.6F RESEARCH

Research creates leads and answers.

Typical skills: Investigation, Lore, Science, Contacts.

Outcome: gain a truth, a weakness, a map, a name, a location, or a method.

If the answer is required, don’t gate it behind a roll. Use the roll to determine:

- how fast you learn it
- what it costs

- what complication you trigger (“someone notices your questions”)

13.6G WORK A CONTACT

Contacts are how one-on-one campaigns expand naturally.

Outcome options:

- obtain controlled access without rolling
- gain a safehouse, vehicle, disguise
- secure a meeting or introduction
- learn a rumor that becomes a hook
- convert a problem into a favor owed (debt Clock)

Typical skills: Influence, Streetwise, Presence.

Failure: the contact demands more, delays, or creates exposure.

13.6H PROJECT (BUILD / REPAIR / CRAFT)

A Project is a longer-term downtime effort: crafting, building, repairing, writing, decoding, modifying.

Projects use:

- a **Project Clock** (usually 4 ticks)
- each Project action can tick it on success
- complications can tick a Risk Clock

Director Tip: Keep projects simple: one Clock, one risk Clock. Don’t turn it into a second game.

13.6I BOND (COMPANION)

Bond is a downtime action that strengthens the relationship and creates protective momentum.

Bond scenes can be:

- confessions

- shared rituals
- training together
- jokes in the dark
- grief, forgiveness, promises

Mechanical outcome (starter): choose one:

- clarify Bond (strengthen it with a new sentence)
- gain a situational permission (“the Companion can Assist on this type of roll without needing special positioning once next session”)
- recover emotional stability (reduce a stress-like Clock if used in your campaign)
- justify a future Companion upgrade purchase

Bond does not require a roll unless the relationship is in crisis.

13.6J RESOLVE FRICTION (COMPANION)

Resolve Friction is a downtime action used when tension is active and consequences are near.

This action can:

- prevent the Companion from withdrawing support
- revise Friction to a new form (tension transforms)
- close a “Trust” Clock before it fills
- restore the Companion’s willingness to Screen or Anchor

Director Tip: Friction is fuel, not poison. Don’t remove it; evolve it.

13.7 Step 4 — Spend GP and Apply Growth

After downtime actions resolve, the Protagonist may spend GP according to the Growth rules (Chapter 12). Downtime is where training, recovery, and access justify those purchases.

Common Misuse: Spending GP with no in-story justification. One-on-One becomes richer when numbers reflect what happened.

13.8 Downtime and Time Passage (Director Guidance)

Time passing is not free. If weeks pass, the Director should:

- tick at least one antagonist Clock
- advance a faction response
- change the situation in the world

This keeps the campaign alive.

13.9 Example: One Downtime Round

EXAMPLE: “Heal and Lay Low”

Frame: You’re in a borrowed apartment. It’s safe for now, but Heat is 2/4.

Protagonist actions: Recover and Lay Low.

Recover: Medicine test with Advantage +10 (good kit). Success: your Medium wound is stabilized and you can function; penalties remain relevant, but the Director rules you can begin stepping down with time.

Lay Low: Deception test. Success: Heat reduces by 1 (now 1/4).

Outcome: You spend GP to raise Security by +5% (training justified by the break-in that went wrong).

The next session opens with lower Heat and a Protagonist who is hurt—but not spiraling.

13.10 Quick Reference (Downtime Summary)

- Downtime Round:
 1. frame safety + time + background Clocks
 2. choose **2 actions**
 3. roll only if meaningful (state stakes)
 4. apply outcomes + spend GP

- Common actions: Recover, Train, Resupply, Acquire, Lay Low, Research, Contact, Project, Bond, Resolve Friction

Cross-References

- Growth and GP spending: **Book I, Chapter 12**
 - Wounds and recovery pressure: **Book I, Chapter 8**
 - Gear access permissions: **Book I, Chapter 9**
 - Companion anchors and actions: **Book I, Chapter 6**
 - Clocks as long-term tracks: **Book I, Chapter 11**
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Appendix A: Skill Sets (Three Base Genres)

These pages compile **three base Genre Skill Sets** in a consistent “ready-to-run” format. Each skill entry includes:

- **Skill Line** (Attribute, Tags, and [Specialist] marking)
- **Genre-appropriate Description** (3–4 sentences)
- **Common Applications** (6+ bullet uses) with example **Advantage/Disadvantage** conditions ($\pm 10/\pm 20/\pm 30$)

Cross-References (Core Rules):

Advantages & Disadvantages (Book I, Chapter 3) • **Contests & Lesser Wins** (Book I, Chapter 8) • **Destiny Points** (Book I, Chapter 5) • **Companion Assist (+10)** (Book I, Chapter 6)

Director Tip (Fast Rulings): If a bullet says “–10/–20/–30,” treat that as a *typical* circumstance modifier—not a hard law. Match the fiction first, then pick the nearest step.

Common Misuse (Across All Genres): Don’t replace a skill with another just because the player likes it. If the action is “getting into position unseen,” it’s Stealth; if it’s “hitting once you’re in position,” it’s the weapon skill.

Great With (Across All Genres): Destiny Points are best used when a roll would meaningfully pivot the story—especially in Contests. Stacking **+10 to self** and **–10 to the foe** creates clean “hero moments” without changing the engine.

GENRE SKILL SET: MEDIEVAL / FANTASY

1) Archery (Agility) — [Combat, Ranged]

Archery covers bows, crossbows, and thrown-weapon marksmanship where timing and control matter more than brute force. It includes stance, breath control, judging wind and distance, and choosing angles that defeat shields or cover. Use it for hunting, skirmishing, volleys, and precision shots when you can see what you’re aiming at. It does not replace stealth or tracking—those skills get you into position; Archery is what you do once you’re there.

- Shoot at distance; called shots (Director may impose –10/–20)
- Fire from concealment (+10 if unseen; –20 if rushed)
- Long-range shots (–10/–20 by distance and wind)
- Volley fire to drive enemies back (+10 if target area is crowded)
- Hunt small game (+10 with clear sign; –10 in rain)
- Shoot from horseback (–20 unless trained; +10 if stable mount and time)

2) Blades (Agility) — [Combat, Melee]

Blades represents training with knives, swords, and other edged weapons, emphasizing footwork, timing, and precision. It covers dueling technique, parries, feints, quick draws, and close-quarters fighting where speed matters. Use it when you want to outmaneuver an opponent rather than overpower them. It doesn't grant armor-breaking force by default—that's what Blunt Weapons or Polearms tend to do better.

- Duel with knives/swords (+10 with superior reach; –10 if cramped)
- Parry and riposte (+10 if defending from full stance; –10 if surprised)
- Disarm attempts (–10 unless you won previous exchange)
- Fight in tight corridors (–10 if weapon too long; +10 with short blade)
- Bleed-out precision strikes (–20 if armored; +10 if target exposed)
- Quick draw and strike (+10 if prepared; –10 if entangled)

3) Polearms (Might) — [Combat, Melee]

Polearms governs spears, glaives, halberds, and long-hafted weapons designed to control space and punish approach. It emphasizes leverage, bracing, and using reach to keep enemies at the edge of danger. Use it to hold chokepoints, set against charges, and fight in formations or doorways. It is less effective in cramped quarters unless you can shorten your grip or create space.

- Hold a line / keep distance (+10 with formation; –10 alone vs agile foe)
- Set vs charge (+20 if braced; –20 if caught flat-footed)
- Sweep/trip attack (–10 on uneven ground; +10 vs large targets)
- Attack over allies (+10 if protected; –10 if shoved)
- Control narrow passage (+20 if doorway; –10 if flanked)
- Hook shield/weapon (–10 unless leverage; +10 with higher ground)

4) Blunt Weapons (Might) — [Combat, Melee]

Blunt Weapons covers hammers, maces, clubs, and other tools of crushing impact. It excels at battering armor, breaking shields, smashing doors, and forcing quick outcomes through raw force. Use it when you need to crack defenses instead of slipping past them. It's loud, obvious, and often tiring—subtlety and finesse are not its strengths.

- Smash armor and bone (+10 vs armored; –10 vs nimble)
- Break doors/locks (+10 with space to swing; –20 in cramped)
- Stun strikes (–10 vs helm; +10 if target unaware)
- Crowd control swings (+10 vs clustered foes; –10 if allies near)
- Grapple-to-strike (+10 if you already grappled)
- Improvised club use (–10 for poor balance; +10 if heavy object)

5) Shields (Might) — [Combat, Defense]

Shields is the skill of turning a portable wall into advantage: blocking, bashing, forming guard lines, and protecting allies. It includes bracing under heavy hits, keeping your stance, and reading incoming attacks to absorb or redirect them. Use it to survive outnumbered moments, protect the Companion, and control tight spaces. It does not replace Melee skill for striking—though shield bashes and shoves can create openings.

- Block melee blows (+10 with Full Defense; –10 if flanked)
- Deflect arrows (+10 with cover; –20 vs close-range volley)
- Shield bash (–10 vs braced target; +10 if charging)
- Protect Companion (+20 if adjacent; –10 if separated)
- Form shield wall (+20 with allies; –20 alone)
- Hold doorway (+20 in choke point; –10 if forced back)

6) Brawling (Might) — [Combat, Grapple]

Brawling covers unarmed fighting, wrestling, clinches, throws, and the brutal practicality of close-contact struggle. It's the skill of controlling limbs, breaking balance, and ending a fight without relying on weapons. Use it to restrain, disarm, choke, or drag an enemy where you want them. Armor, size differences, and terrain matter greatly—Brawling thrives when leverage is on your side.

- Punch/kick in close (+10 vs unarmored; –10 vs mailed)
- Clinch and restrain (+10 with size advantage; –20 if smaller)
- Throw/trip (+10 on firm ground; –10 in mud)
- Choke/disable (–20 vs helm/armor; +10 from behind)
- Fight while grabbed (–10 if pinned; +10 if leverage)
- Disarm barehanded (–20 unless foe off-balance)

7) Riding (Awareness) — [Vehicle, Mount]

Riding measures how well you command a mount under pressure—speed, obstacles, fear, and battle noise. It includes reading the animal's intent, managing pace, and staying balanced while acting from the saddle. Use it for mounted travel, pursuit, mounted archery support, and dangerous terrain. It doesn't substitute for Beast Handling when training or calming unfamiliar animals, but it can keep you alive when the mount panics.

- Control mount under stress (+10 if bonded; –20 if unfamiliar)
- Mounted combat support (+10 if trained saddle; –10 if rough terrain)
- Fast travel and pacing (+10 with road; –10 off-trail)
- Jump obstacles (–10 risky jump; +10 with clear approach)
- Calm spooked mount (+10 if quiet; –20 amid fire/loud combat)
- Track while riding (–10 speed; +10 slow careful pace)

8) Beast Handling (Presence) — [Social, Survival]

Beast Handling is your ability to calm, direct, and understand animals through posture, voice, and practiced routines. It covers training simple behaviors, preventing stampedes, and reading signs of aggression or fear. Use it to keep pack animals steady, manage war beasts, and build trust with pets and mounts. It's not mind control—wild creatures remain wild, and a wounded animal may ignore even expert handling.

- Calm animals (+10 with food; -20 if wounded animal)
- Train basic behaviors (+10 with time; -10 rushed)
- Read animal intent (+10 with familiarity; -10 unknown species)
- Lead pack animals (+10 with routine; -10 in storm)
- Manage war beasts (-20 if terrified beast; +10 with handler tools)
- Prevent stampede (+20 if early warning; -20 if already panicking)

9) Tracking (Awareness) — [Exploration, Survival]

Tracking is the craft of reading the world like a page: footprints, broken branches, disturbed soil, and the subtle patterns of movement. It includes estimating numbers, speed, and intent from signs, and recognizing when someone is trying to hide their trail. Use it for pursuit, avoiding ambushes, and finding hidden camps or lairs. Weather, terrain, and time can erase truth quickly—Tracking is strongest when you act fast.

- Follow footprints (+10 soft ground; -20 on stone)
- Interpret broken brush (+10 daylight; -10 dusk)
- Estimate numbers/speed (+10 fresh signs; -20 old trail)
- Avoid counter-tracking (-10 vs clever quarry; +10 with time)
- Track in bad weather (-20 rain/snow; +10 if very fresh)
- Hide your own trail (+10 with knowledge; -10 hurried flight)

10) Wilderness Survival (Awareness) — [Exploration, Survival]

Wilderness Survival covers living through harsh conditions: shelter, fire, water, navigation, and avoiding exposure. It includes practical fieldcraft—knowing what to do first when the world tries to kill you. Use it to keep traveling, endure storms, and keep the Companion alive when supplies fail. It's not the same as Tracking or Herbalism; Survival keeps you functioning, while those skills find prey or craft remedies.

- Find shelter (+10 with materials; -20 barren terrain)
- Start fire (+10 dry tinder; -20 wet/wind)
- Find water (+10 in known region; -20 desert)
- Forage safely (+10 familiar plants; -20 unknown toxins)
- Navigate by stars (+10 clear sky; -20 overcast)
- Endure exposure (-10 cold; -20 blizzard; +10 good gear)

11) Herbalism (Intellect) — [Medical, Craft]

Herbalism is the knowledge of plants, roots, fungi, and natural compounds used for medicine, toxins, dyes, and poultices. It includes identifying what's safe, what's useful, and what will kill you if you guess wrong. Use it to brew field remedies, mild sedatives, and antidote components when apothecaries are far away. It works best with time, tools, and local familiarity—unknown regions turn certainty into risk.

- Identify useful plants (+10 in season; –20 out of region)
- Brew poultices (+10 proper tools; –10 improvised)
- Antidotes (–20 rare toxin; +10 reference notes)
- Sedatives (–10 ethical risk; +10 precise dosage tools)
- Preserving herbs (+10 dry storage; –10 humid travel)
- Diagnose by symptoms (+10 time/exam; –20 hurried battlefield)

12) Healing (Intellect) — [Medical]

Healing is hands-on treatment: stopping bleeding, cleaning wounds, setting bones, preventing infection, and stabilizing the dying. It's the skill of triage and judgment—knowing what matters now and what can wait. Use it after battle, during crises, or to keep consequences from becoming fatal. It doesn't erase wounds instantly, but it can prevent escalation and speed recovery when the story allows rest.

- Stabilize wounds (+10 clean bandage; –20 under attack)
- Treat infection (+10 early; –20 late-stage)
- Set bones (+10 help/assist; –20 no splint)
- Remove arrows (–10 deep barbs; +10 proper tools)
- Long-term recovery plan (+10 safe shelter; –20 forced march)
- Triage multiple injured (+10 calm space; –20 chaos)

13) Stealthcraft (Agility) — [Exploration]

Stealthcraft is the physical practice of being unseen and unheard—moving with care, hiding in cover, and using timing to slip past watchful eyes. It includes infiltration, shadowing, escaping pursuit, and concealing objects. Use it when the best fight is the one you never start. Heavy armor, bright torchlight, and noisy surfaces make Stealthcraft a constant negotiation with the environment.

- Move silently (+10 soft ground; –20 gravel/armor)
- Hide in shadows (+10 clutter; –20 bright torchlight)
- Infiltrate camps (–10 alert guards; +10 disguise support)
- Shadow a target (+10 crowds; –20 empty streets)
- Conceal items (+10 good hiding spot; –10 searchers)
- Escape pursuit unseen (+10 alleyways; –20 open field)

14) Thievery (Agility) — [Tech, Exploration] [Specialist]

Thievery is trained precision with locks, traps, and the small crimes that open big doors. It includes picking mechanisms, disabling simple devices, sleight of hand, and leaving little trace behind. Use it to bypass barriers quietly when force would raise alarms or change the situation. Thievery is Specialist because mistakes are costly—bad tools, rushed work, or unfamiliar designs can punish overconfidence.

- Pick locks (+10 good tools; –20 poor lock or rushed)
- Disable simple traps (+10 time; –20 complex mechanism)
- Pickpocket (+10 crowd; –20 target suspicious)
- Sleight of hand (+10 distraction; –10 close scrutiny)
- Bypass barred doors (–10 noisy; +10 with leverage)
- Hide contraband (+10 false bottom; –20 strip-search)

15) Streetwise (Awareness) — [Social, Exploration]

Streetwise is survival in settlements: reading neighborhoods, knowing who to ask, and sensing trouble before it becomes a blade in the dark. It includes finding black markets, safehouses, rumor networks, and the invisible lines of gang or faction territory. Use it to move through cities without becoming prey. It's not Etiquette—Streetwise speaks to back alleys and taverns, not courts and banners.

- Find black markets (+10 local; –20 outsider)
- Locate safehouses (+10 favors owed; –10 hostile district)
- Read gang territory signs (+10 daylight; –10 rain/night)
- Identify scams (+10 experience; –20 desperate situation)
- Spread rumors (+10 taverns; –20 fearful populace)
- Avoid trouble routes (+10 local map; –10 unfamiliar)

16) Etiquette (Presence) — [Social]

Etiquette is the language of status—what you say, how you say it, and when silence is safer than honesty. It covers court manners, formal requests, gift-giving expectations, and the ability to avoid accidental insult. Use it when power is social and consequences are political. Etiquette doesn't guarantee friendship, but it prevents needless enemies when you enter a room that can ruin you with a smile.

- Court manners (+10 proper dress; –20 insulted host)
- Interpret status cues (+10 observing; –10 rushed)
- Deliver formal requests (+10 gifts; –10 bad timing)
- Avoid social traps (+10 prepared; –20 ambushed topic)
- Host negotiations (+10 neutral ground; –10 hostile court)
- Earn audience (–20 low status; +10 strong patron)

17) Persuasion (Presence) — [Social]

Persuasion is honest influence: negotiation, inspiring speeches, calming anger, and persuading people to see your path as their best option. It includes bargaining, recruiting help, and de-escalating violence before it becomes inevitable. Use it when you want cooperation without deception or threats. Persuasion works best with leverage—favors, shared goals, proof, or empathy—rather than raw charm alone.

- Bargain prices (+10 leverage; –10 desperate)
- Rally allies (+10 inspiring moment; –20 demoralized)
- De-escalate fights (+10 calm tone; –20 blood already spilled)
- Recruit help (+10 payment; –10 fear)
- Interrogate gently (+10 rapport; –20 time pressure)
- Convince gatekeepers (+10 papers; –20 known criminal)

18) Deception (Presence) — [Social]

Deception is the craft of untruth: lies, disguises, misdirection, and making someone choose the wrong conclusion confidently. It includes cover stories, feints, planted evidence, and masking intent behind partial truths. Use it when you need access, time, or advantage you can't earn openly. Deception is powerful but fragile—once the mask cracks, future lies suffer lasting Disadvantage.

- Lie convincingly (+10 consistent story; –20 caught before)
- Fake identity (+10 good disguise; –20 known face)
- Misdirect attention (+10 distraction; –10 focused watch)
- Bluff in combat (+10 feint; –20 veteran opponent)
- Forge intent signals (+10 props; –10 none)
- Conceal motives (+10 partial truths; –20 intense scrutiny)

19) Intimidation (Presence) — [Social]

Intimidation is coercive pressure: making someone comply because resisting feels dangerous, costly, or hopeless. It includes threats, dominance displays, breaking morale, and stopping violence through fear of consequences. Use it to force retreats, extract quick compliance, or hold a crowd at bay. Intimidation is risky—cornered targets may lash out, and intimidation without real leverage often collapses.

- Threaten compliance (+10 power display; –20 target fearless)
- Break morale (+10 public; –10 alone)
- Shake information loose (–10 if target trained; +10 if terrified)
- Hold crowd at bay (+10 weapon shown; –20 outnumbered)
- Assert dominance (+10 reputation; –20 unknown nobody)
- Prevent betrayal (+10 leverage; –20 target cornered)

20) Lore: Arcane (Intellect) — [Knowledge, Mystic]

Lore: Arcane is academic understanding of magic as a system—symbols, schools, historical rituals, cursed items, and the patterns that repeat across legends. It helps you identify what you’re facing and what it might do before it does it to you. Use it to interpret runes, recognize magical factions, and predict the shape of supernatural danger. It does not let you cast—Spellcraft and Ritual govern active practice.

- Identify magical symbols (+10 reference book; –20 obscure school)
- Recall legends (+10 local bard; –10 distant culture)
- Interpret rituals (+10 time; –20 mid-combat)
- Recognize cursed items (+10 careful exam; –20 masked curse)
- Know magical factions (+10 study; –10 rumor-only)
- Predict magical hazards (+10 prior warning; –20 unknown anomaly)

21) Lore: Kingdoms (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Lore: Kingdoms is the knowledge of realms, politics, customs, laws, geography, heraldry, and the histories that shape what people will risk. It covers who rules, who hates whom, and which border will execute you for the wrong banner. Use it to navigate social and political minefields, interpret documents, and plan travel intelligently. It’s strongest when paired with Etiquette or Streetwise depending on the kind of power you’re dealing with.

- Know laws and customs (+10 local; –20 foreign)
- Recognize heraldry (+10 clear view; –10 damaged)
- Understand politics (+10 informed; –20 propaganda)
- Map regions (+10 good chart; –10 crude sketch)
- Identify languages/dialects (+10 common; –20 rare)
- Recall famous NPCs (+10 well-known; –10 obscure)

22) Spellcraft (Intellect) — [Mystic] [Specialist]

Spellcraft is the trained act of shaping magical force safely and effectively—control, precision, and stability. It governs the “casting roll” for spells defined later in a genre module, and it also supports countering or resisting magical effects when rules call for it. Use it to channel energy, maintain concentration, or redirect volatile magic before it explodes into consequences. Spellcraft is Specialist because raw power without discipline is often worse than failure.

- Sense magical workings (+10 focus; –20 noisy chaos)
- Control energy safely (+10 training; –20 raw power)
- Counter basic effects (+10 prepared; –20 surprise)
- Channel through tool (+10 proper focus; –10 improvised)
- Sustain concentration (+10 calm; –20 wounded)
- Interpret magical theory (+10 study; –10 guessing)

(Specific spells are defined in later modules; this skill governs the act of casting/controlling.)

23) Ritual (Presence) — [Mystic] [Specialist]

Ritual is ceremonial magic: slow, deliberate workings that bind, ward, sanctify, curse, or invoke through structure and symbolism. It covers leading groups, maintaining sacred space, and paying costs—time, components, oaths, or narrative bargains. Use it for major supernatural shifts rather than quick battlefield effects. Ritual is Specialist because it's unforgiving; interruption, missing components, or flawed wording can twist outcomes.

- Conduct long rites (+10 prepared space; –20 interrupted)
- Lead group chanting (+10 helpers; –10 alone)
- Bind oaths/wards (+10 proper components; –20 missing key item)
- Invoke entities (–20 dangerous; +10 protective circle)
- Maintain sanctity (+10 quiet; –20 hostile territory)
- Sacrifice and cost management (+10 planned; –20 rushed)

24) Crafting: Smithing (Intellect) — [Craft]

Smithing is forging and repairing metal arms, armor, tools, and hardware under medieval constraints. It includes assessing quality, improving balance, fixing war damage, and knowing when a piece will fail. Use it to keep gear functional and to turn scrap into survival. In the field, Smithing often suffers Disadvantage—without a forge and time, you're improvising rather than forging.

- Repair weapons (+10 forge/tools; –20 field repair)
- Shape armor (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Assess metal quality (+10 good light; –10 poor)
- Improve edge/balance (+10 skill station; –10 improvised)
- Jury-rig hinges/parts (+10 spare metal; –20 none)
- Identify counterfeit gear (+10 inspection; –10 hurried)

25) Crafting: Wood/Leather (Intellect) — [Craft]

Wood/Leather covers making and repairing the practical things that keep people alive: straps, boots, packs, bows, arrow shafts, shelters, and camouflage. It includes working with natural materials and crafting solutions from what the environment provides. Use it to patch gear quickly, build concealment, and keep supplies from collapsing at the worst time. This craft thrives on availability—good materials grant Advantage, scarcity imposes Disadvantage.

- Repair straps/boots (+10 kit; –10 bare hands)
- Make arrows (+10 quality wood; –20 wet wood)
- Build simple shelter (+10 materials; –20 time limit)
- Create scabbards/sheaths (+10 tools; –10 improvised)
- Patch armor (+10 time; –20 in rain)

- Create camouflage (+10 foliage; –10 sparse terrain)

26) Siege & Demolition (Intellect) — [Combat, Tech] [Specialist]

Siege & Demolition is the knowledge of breaking fortifications and surviving the attempt: weak points, load-bearing structures, fire tactics, and sabotage. It includes building or defeating simple siege works and placing destructive tools effectively. Use it when walls, gates, and engines become the battlefield. It is Specialist because errors are catastrophic—collapse, fire spread, and unintended casualties are always on the table.

- Use battering rams (+10 team; –20 alone)
- Set basic charges/firepots (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Recognize weak points (+10 inspection; –10 under fire)
- Build simple siege works (+10 labor; –20 shortage)
- Sabotage engines (+10 stealth; –20 guarded)
- Avoid collapse hazards (+10 cautious; –20 reckless urgency)

GENRE SKILL SET: MODERN

Director Tip (Modern Play): Modern scenes love Clocks. A failed Surveillance or Hacking roll doesn't have to mean "caught"—it can mean **pressure begins** (Book I, Ch. 11.2).

1) Firearms (Agility) — [Combat, Ranged] [Specialist]

Firearms covers pistols, rifles, shotguns, and automatic weapons—sight picture, recoil control, reload discipline, and target transitions. It includes combat shooting under stress, using cover intelligently, and choosing when not to shoot. Use it for accurate engagement, suppression, and fast response in lethal environments. It's Specialist because safety, malfunctions, and real-world ballistics punish improvisation.

- Accurate shots (+10 braced; –20 running)
- Controlled bursts (+10 trained; –20 panic spray)
- Target through cover (–10 light cover; –20 strong cover)
- Reload under stress (–10 rushed; +10 practiced mag swap)
- Clear malfunctions (+10 time; –20 under fire)
- Called shots (–20 small target; +10 stationary target)

2) Close Quarters Combat (Might/Agility) — [Combat, Melee]

CQC is practical fighting in tight space: strikes, clinches, takedowns, disarms, and restraints. It emphasizes control and decision-making under panic, often aimed at ending a threat quickly rather than "winning" cleanly. Use it when guns aren't viable, when you need someone alive, or when you're grabbed. CQC is shaped heavily by environment—hallways, furniture, allies nearby, and legal/ethical constraints.

- Strikes and clinches (+10 size; –20 injured)

- Disarm attempts (–10 trained foe; +10 if surprised)
- Take-downs (+10 solid footing; –20 slippery)
- Use environment (+10 hard surface; –10 fragile crowd)
- Fight in tight spaces (+10 compact stance; –10 against longer reach)
- Restrain without harm (+10 zip ties; –20 solo vs strong target)

3) Athletics (Might) — [Physical]

Athletics is raw physical capability: sprinting, climbing, jumping, swimming, forced movement, and carrying loads. It's used when your body is the tool and time matters. Use it to escape, pursue, force entry, or endure hard movement through hostile terrain. Athletics doesn't include vehicle handling or stealth—those are separate problems with separate consequences.

- Sprinting (+10 clear path; –20 obstacles)
- Climbing (+10 gear; –20 rain)
- Swimming (+10 calm water; –20 current)
- Forcing doors (+10 leverage; –20 reinforced)
- Carrying loads (+10 pack; –20 awkward weight)
- Long exertion (–10 heat; –20 exhaustion)

4) Driving (Awareness) — [Vehicle] [Specialist]

Driving covers control of cars, motorcycles, trucks, and other ground vehicles under normal and extreme conditions. It includes high-speed pursuit, evasive maneuvers, tight navigation, and keeping control when the vehicle is damaged. Use it for chases, getaways, and tactical positioning where the road becomes the battlefield. It's Specialist because traffic, weather, and physics punish errors instantly.

- High-speed pursuit (+10 clear road; –20 traffic)
- Evasive maneuvers (+10 practice; –20 wet/ice)
- Precision parking/ramming (+10 space; –20 cramped)
- Off-road handling (+10 AWD; –20 low clearance)
- Night driving (–10; –20 no lights)
- Vehicle control after damage (–20 blown tire; +10 stability aids)

5) Navigation (Intellect) — [Exploration]

Navigation is route planning and orientation using maps, landmarks, GPS, and practical sense. It includes predicting delays, avoiding hazards, finding alternate routes, and understanding how terrain shapes movement and exposure. Use it to reach objectives on time and to avoid predictable mistakes. Navigation becomes more important when Clocks are ticking and the Director is escalating pressure.

- Map reading (+10 good map; –10 torn)
- GPS usage (+10 signal; –20 jammed)

- Route planning (+10 time; -20 deadline)
- Avoid checkpoints (+10 intel; -20 random patrols)
- Urban shortcuts (+10 local knowledge; -20 unfamiliar city)
- Wilderness orientation (+10 clear landmarks; -20 fog)

6) Surveillance (Awareness) — [Tech, Investigation] [Specialist]

Surveillance is watching without being seen: tails, stakeouts, camera placement, pattern tracking, and recognizing counter-surveillance tactics. It includes patience, discipline, and knowing when to break off rather than get caught. Use it to gather information safely and to prove what you suspect. It's Specialist because a single mistake flips the scene—suddenly you're the one being watched.

- Tail a target (+10 crowds; -20 empty roads)
- Stakeout patience (+10 prepared; -20 fatigue)
- Camera placement (+10 good angle; -20 obvious location)
- Counter-surveillance (-10 skilled opponent; +10 trained team)
- Identify watchers (+10 time; -20 chaotic scene)
- Track patterns (+10 repeated behavior; -20 one-off)

7) Investigation (Intellect) — [Investigation]

Investigation is reconstructing truth from fragments: evidence, contradictions, timelines, records, and the hidden logic beneath a mess. It covers searching environments, analyzing documents, and connecting suspects or events into a coherent chain. Use it to turn mystery into actionable choices. Investigation thrives on time and access—rushed work or missing data creates Disadvantage and false certainty.

- Reconstruct timelines (+10 records; -20 missing data)
- Identify inconsistencies (+10 calm; -20 rushed)
- Search locations (+10 methodical; -20 hostile area)
- Interpret evidence (+10 lab access; -10 field guess)
- Connect suspects (+10 network map; -20 disinfo)
- Pattern recognition (+10 repetition; -20 noise)

8) Interrogation (Presence) — [Social] [Specialist]

Interrogation is controlled questioning under pressure—extracting truth without losing control of the subject or the situation. It includes pacing, leverage, reading micro-reactions, and managing threats (legal, ethical, or practical). Use it to break alibis, force clarity, or learn what someone refuses to volunteer. It's Specialist because mishandling an interrogation can create enemies, lies, or consequences that outlast the scene.

- Controlled questioning (+10 rapport; -20 hostile subject)
- Pressure tactics (+10 leverage; -20 legal risk)

- Detect lies (+10 time; –20 drugged subject)
- Break alibis (+10 evidence; –10 none)
- Keep subject talking (+10 calm; –20 interruptions)
- Avoid coercion backlash (+10 professionalism; –20 rage)

9) Persuasion (Presence) — [Social]

Persuasion is legitimate influence—negotiation, rapport, empathy, and framing options so cooperation becomes the rational choice. It’s used for de-escalation, recruiting help, gaining access, and keeping volatile people from doing something irreversible. Use it when you want a better outcome than violence provides. Persuasion is strongest when you can offer something real: safety, money, dignity, or a way out.

- Negotiate cooperation (+10 mutual benefit; –20 no trust)
- Calm volatile people (+10 empathy; –20 active panic)
- Rally allies (+10 shared goal; –20 fear)
- De-escalate conflict (+10 safe exits; –20 weapons drawn)
- Recruit informants (+10 payment; –20 intimidation present)
- Handle gatekeepers (+10 credentials; –20 hostility)

10) Deception (Presence) — [Social]

Deception is the ability to lie convincingly, maintain cover identities, and misdirect scrutiny. It includes forging authority through performance and props, steering conversations away from danger, and planting plausible false leads. Use it when you must get past gates, questions, or suspicion without a fight. Deception is brittle—once exposed, future lies tend to carry lasting Disadvantage.

- Cover stories (+10 consistent details; –20 contradiction)
- Fake authority (+10 uniform/ID; –20 known face)
- Misdirect attention (+10 chaos; –10 scrutiny)
- Bluff in negotiations (+10 confidence; –20 expert opponent)
- Conceal intent (+10 partial truths; –20 cross-exam)
- Plant false leads (+10 time; –20 active investigation)

11) Intimidation (Presence) — [Social]

Intimidation is pressure and threat: making compliance feel safer than resistance. It includes commanding presence, moral dominance, fear tactics, and leveraging consequences the target believes you can enforce. Use it for rapid control when time is short and emotions are high. Intimidation can backfire—if you don’t have leverage, it can provoke panic, violence, or stubborn refusal.

- Threaten compliance (+10 dominance; –20 fearless target)
- Command presence (+10 authority; –20 outnumbered)
- Suppress riots (+10 backup; –20 alone)

- Force retreat (+10 weapon display; –20 target armed/trained)
- Shake info loose (+10 leverage; –20 hardened criminal)
- Prevent betrayal (+10 consequences; –20 target cornered)

12) Computers (Intellect) – [Tech] [Specialist]

Computers covers general computing expertise: systems use, diagnostics, data recovery, log analysis, encryption tools, and software competence. It supports investigations and operations without necessarily crossing into illegal intrusion. Use it to interpret digital evidence, secure information, or restore damaged data under pressure. It's Specialist because modern systems are complex, and mistakes can destroy evidence or trigger alarms.

- Basic intrusion (–10 secured; –20 hardened)
- Data recovery (+10 backups; –20 wiped drive)
- Social engineering support (+10 intel; –10 blind)
- Trace digital footprints (+10 logs; –20 spoofing)
- Encrypt/decrypt (+10 tools; –20 time pressure)
- System diagnostics (+10 access; –20 remote only)

13) Hacking (Intellect) – [Tech, Intrusion] [Specialist]

Hacking is hostile or covert intrusion: bypassing authentication, exploiting vulnerabilities, gaining access, and avoiding detection. It includes remote device control, planted malware, and disabling security systems. Use it when you need doors to open that were designed not to. Hacking is Specialist because defenses escalate fast, and failure often creates immediate consequences—locks tighten, alarms trigger, traces lead back.

- Bypass authentication (–20 MFA; +10 stolen creds)
- Disable cameras/alarms (–10 consumer; –20 pro-grade)
- Remote control devices (+10 known model; –20 unknown firmware)
- Plant malware (–10 user careless; –20 trained user)
- Evade detection (+10 slow careful; –20 rushed)
- Exploit zero-days (module/gear dependent; often –20 baseline)

14) Engineering (Intellect) – [Tech, Craft] [Specialist]

Engineering is applied technical problem-solving: electronics repair, structural assessment, system disablement, and safe improvisation. It includes building a workable solution from limited parts and preventing small failures from becoming catastrophic. Use it to keep equipment alive in the field and to turn time into survival. It's Specialist because wrong answers can burn out systems, injure people, or collapse structures.

- Repair electronics (+10 bench/tools; –20 field)
- Improvised circuits (+10 spare parts; –20 none)

- Evaluate structures (+10 inspection; –20 under fire)
- Disable systems safely (+10 schematics; –20 guesswork)
- Build simple devices (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Prevent catastrophic failure (+10 early; –20 late)

15) Medicine (Intellect) — [Medical]

Medicine is modern first aid and treatment: stabilizing trauma, preventing shock, managing infection, and keeping patients alive until the next step. It includes triage and judgment under panic, with a focus on immediate priorities. Use it to reduce wound escalation and to recover functioning after disaster. Medicine is limited by tools and environment—sterile spaces grant Advantage; chaos and contamination impose Disadvantage.

- Stabilize bleeding (+10 kit; –20 under fire)
- Treat shock (+10 calm; –20 chaos)
- CPR/resuscitation (+10 quick response; –20 delayed)
- Diagnose symptoms (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Manage infection (+10 clean; –20 contaminated)
- Triage multiple casualties (+10 help; –20 alone)

16) Tactical Awareness (Awareness) — [Combat]

Tactical Awareness is reading a fight before it kills you: threat lines, cover value, timing, angles, and enemy intent. It's used to choose when to move, when to hold, and how to keep the Companion from becoming a liability. Use it to anticipate ambushes, coordinate actions, and avoid bad positions. It doesn't replace weapon skills—it makes your weapon skills matter.

- Read threats (+10 clear sightlines; –20 smoke)
- Choose cover (+10 good terrain; –10 open space)
- Anticipate ambush (+10 intel; –20 surprise)
- Coordinate with Companion (+10 comms; –20 separated)
- Time movement (+10 patience; –20 forced sprint)
- Spot weak points (+10 observation; –20 panic)

17) Stealth (Agility) — [Exploration]

Stealth is moving unseen through modern environments: cameras, sightlines, sound discipline, and timing. It includes avoiding patrol patterns, using crowds as cover, and slipping away before a scene becomes a chase. Use it when you want control over engagement rather than reacting to it. Stealth is fragile under bright light, open spaces, or heavy gear.

- Silent movement (+10 soft surfaces; –20 gravel)
- Stay hidden (+10 clutter; –20 bright light)

- Infiltrate buildings (+10 plan; –20 locked layers)
- Lose a tail (+10 crowds; –20 open streets)
- Conceal gear (+10 proper stash; –20 quick hiding)
- Escape scenes unseen (+10 exits known; –20 dead ends)

18) Lockpicking (Agility) – [Tech] [Specialist]

Lockpicking is the trained art of bypassing mechanical locks quietly and efficiently. It includes recognizing lock types, avoiding damage, opening restraints, and entering without leaving obvious signs. Use it to keep operations discreet and to prevent a “simple door” from becoming an entire scene. It’s Specialist because rushed entry and bad tools often lead to noise, broken mechanisms, and attention.

- Pick mechanical locks (+10 tools; –20 cheap tools)
- Bypass deadbolts (–10; –20 high-security)
- Open handcuffs (+10 correct pick; –20 improvised)
- Quiet entry (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Avoid leaving traces (+10 careful; –10 hurried)
- Recognize trap locks (+10 experience; –20 unfamiliar)

19) Demolitions (Intellect) – [Combat, Tech] [Specialist]

Demolitions is controlled destruction: placing charges, calculating blast effects, breaching safely, and disarming explosive threats. It includes risk management—preventing collateral harm and understanding how structures fail. Use it for breaches, diversions, and bomb disposal where mistakes are final. It’s Specialist because the cost of failure is immediate, severe, and rarely contained.

- Place charges (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Breach doors/walls (+10 correct placement; –20 bad angle)
- Disarm explosives (+10 calm; –30 timer)
- Estimate blast radius (+10 chart; –10 guess)
- Create diversions (+10 controlled; –20 near civilians)
- Handle unstable materials (–20 janky; +10 proper storage)

20) Fieldcraft (Awareness) – [Survival]

Fieldcraft is staying functional outdoors: concealment, tracking basics, shelter, fire discipline, and avoiding exposure. It bridges survival and stealth in real terrain rather than fantasy wilderness. Use it for manhunts, remote missions, and “off-grid” scenes where cities can’t help you. Fieldcraft is sensitive to weather and time—storms and exhaustion impose Disadvantage fast.

- Track humans (+10 soft ground; –20 city pavement)
- Build concealment (+10 foliage; –20 barren)
- Start fire discreetly (+10 dry; –20 wet)

- Find water (+10 known area; –20 drought)
- Navigate without tech (+10 stars; –20 fog)
- Avoid exposure (–10 cold; –20 extreme)

21) Streetwise (Awareness) — [Social]

Streetwise is navigating the human terrain: neighborhoods, criminal economies, informal rules, and how danger advertises itself. It includes finding fixers, recognizing scams, interpreting gang signals, and avoiding predictable mistakes. Use it to get information without drawing heat. Streetwise differs from Persuasion—it's not about convincing; it's about knowing where you stand.

- Find illegal goods (+10 local; –20 outsider)
- Identify gangs (+10 signs; –10 rain/night)
- Find fixers (+10 contacts; –20 hostile district)
- Avoid hotspots (+10 intel; –20 sudden unrest)
- Read scams (+10 experience; –20 desperate)
- Spread rumors (+10 bars; –20 surveillance state)

22) Performance (Presence) — [Social]

Performance is controlled presentation: blending in, distracting, speaking publicly, and shaping how others perceive you. It includes acting under pressure, managing cameras, and keeping a cover persona stable through scrutiny. Use it to move through social spaces without triggering suspicion or to manipulate attention. Performance pairs well with Deception, but it can also be used honestly (speeches, presentations, media).

- Blend into crowds (+10 act natural; –20 wrong dress)
- Distract targets (+10 audience; –20 hostile)
- Earn trust fast (+10 charm; –20 suspicion)
- Public speaking (+10 prepared; –20 heckled)
- Create cover identity (+10 practiced; –10 first time)
- Handle media (+10 good angle; –20 scandal)

23) Leadership (Presence) — [Social, Combat]

Leadership is directing people under pressure—clear orders, morale control, coordination, and keeping a team from fracturing. In One-on-One, it often appears through directing NPC allies or managing the Companion in chaotic scenes. Use it to hold lines, assign tasks, and keep plans from collapsing mid-crisis. Leadership isn't dominance; it's clarity—confusion is its natural enemy.

- Coordinate allies (+10 comms; –20 chaos)
- Hold morale (+10 inspiration; –20 losses)
- Assign tasks (+10 planning; –10 rushed)

- Enforce discipline (+10 respect; –20 mutiny)
- Negotiate unity (+10 shared goal; –20 rival factions)
- Direct Companion effectively (+10 Bond; –10 strained relationship)

24) Resolve (Presence) — [Mental]

Resolve is psychological steadiness: resisting fear, coercion, and emotional sabotage. It includes maintaining focus under pain, staying rational in crisis, and holding onto purpose when everything tries to shake it loose. Use it to resist interrogation, panic, or “break scenes” where the world wants you to fold. Resolve often determines whether you keep your agency when stakes spike.

- Resist fear (+10 support; –20 horrors)
- Withstand interrogation (+10 training; –20 exhaustion)
- Hold focus under pain (+10 meds; –20 severe wound)
- Push through fatigue (–10 long night; +10 adrenaline)
- Ignore taunts (+10 calm; –20 personal trigger)
- Stay steady under fire (+10 cover; –20 exposed)

25) Endurance (Fortitude) — [Physical]

Endurance is physical resilience: resisting toxins, surviving harsh temperatures, staying awake, and pushing through fatigue. It measures how long you can keep moving when the story refuses to let you rest. Use it in long pursuits, exposure scenes, and situations where pain would stop a normal person. Endurance doesn’t replace Medicine—it’s what you roll when treatment isn’t available.

- Resist toxins (+10 quick treatment; –20 heavy dose)
- Withstand cold/heat (–10; –20 extreme)
- Run long distance (+10 pacing; –20 dehydration)
- Remain awake (+10 caffeine; –20 days without sleep)
- Ignore pain short-term (+10 will; –20 severe wound)
- Recover after exertion (+10 rest; –20 forced march)

26) Mechanics (Intellect) — [Craft, Tech]

Mechanics is hands-on repair and practical engineering for vehicles, weapons, and equipment. It includes diagnosing failures, improvising fixes, and keeping machines running under bad conditions. Use it to fix engines, stabilize damaged systems, and do field repairs that buy time. Mechanics is less about theory and more about “make it work now.”

- Repair engines (+10 tools; –20 field)
- Hotwire vehicles (–10 old car; –20 modern security)
- Fix firearms jams (+10 training; –20 unfamiliar model)
- Build improvised tools (+10 parts; –20 none)

- Diagnose failures (+10 time; –20 under fire)
- Reinforce weak points (+10 materials; –20 scarcity)

27) First Response (Awareness) — [Emergency]

First Response is crisis action: rapidly assessing danger, securing scenes, evacuating civilians, and preventing secondary disasters. It includes recognizing what will kill people next, not just what’s happening now. Use it when seconds matter and order must be created from chaos. It pairs naturally with Medicine and Tactical Awareness but remains its own skill—triage of the *scene*, not just the body.

- Rapid scene assessment (+10 calm; –20 panic crowd)
- Secure perimeters (+10 backup; –20 alone)
- Evacuate civilians (+10 clear exits; –20 smoke)
- Identify threats (+10 visibility; –20 darkness)
- Coordinate with services (+10 comms; –20 jammed)
- Prevent secondary harm (+10 planning; –20 chaos)

28) Languages (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Languages is understanding and using additional languages, dialects, slang, and coded speech. It includes reading documents, interpreting nuance, and avoiding cultural mistakes that change outcomes. Use it to keep information flowing when barriers would otherwise isolate you. Languages can grant strong Advantage when it prevents misunderstanding—or harsh Disadvantage when you guess wrong.

- Understand spoken language (+10 slow speech; –20 heavy accent)
- Read documents (+10 dictionary; –20 archaic)
- Interpret slang (+10 local; –20 outsider)
- Translate quickly (–10 time pressure; +10 prepared notes)
- Code phrases (+10 shared training; –20 unknown code)
- Cultural nuance (+10 lived experience; –20 foreign context)

GENRE SKILL SET: FUTURISTIC

Director Tip (Futuristic Play): Many “failures” should become **Lesser Wins** with escalating Clocks rather than instant stops—especially for Sensors, Hacking, and Spacecraft Piloting (Book I, Ch. 8.1).

1) Energy Weapons (Agility) — [Combat, Ranged] [Specialist]

Energy Weapons covers laser, pulse, plasma, and other directed-energy arms, emphasizing charge discipline, heat management, and tracking fast targets. It includes using optics and HUD data to maintain accuracy while moving or under sensor interference. Use it for precision fire, disabling shots, and engagements where ammunition is power rather than bullets. It’s Specialist because mishandling heat/charge, bloom, or lock systems can turn a weapon into a liability.

- Accurate bursts (+10 braced; –20 sprinting)
- Manage heat/charge (+10 disciplined; –20 panic fire)
- Shoot through light cover (–10; strong cover –20)
- Target drones (–20 small/fast; +10 locked-on)
- Disable systems (called shots –20; +10 stationary)
- Zero-G firing (–10; –20 uncontrolled spin)

2) Kinetic Weapons (Agility) — [Combat, Ranged] [Specialist]

Kinetic Weapons covers futuristic firearms that still throw mass—smart rounds, coil/rail systems, and advanced recoil platforms. It includes ammo-type selection, armor interaction, and disciplined fire under zero-G or boarding conditions. Use it when penetration and reliability matter more than flashy tech. It's Specialist because modernized ballistics and targeting systems reward training and punish panic.

- Recoil control (+10 braced; –20 awkward stance)
- Ammo discipline (+10 trained; –10 rushed)
- Armor penetration tactics (+10 correct ammo; –20 wrong type)
- Suppression (+10 chokepoint; –10 open area)
- Malfunction clearing (+10 time; –20 under fire)
- Boarding combat (–10 tight corridors; +10 compact weapon)

3) Powered Armor (Fortitude) — [Combat, Tech] [Specialist]

Powered Armor is operating a suit that amplifies strength and survivability—servo motion, power management, stability, and interface control. It includes using suit-assisted movement, managing suit stress, and fighting while carrying heavy weapons. Use it for frontline survival where ordinary bodies would fail. It's Specialist because damaged systems, power drain, and interface lag can kill the overconfident fast.

- Move with servo strength (+10 calibrated; –20 damaged suit)
- Stabilize heavy weapons (+10 anchored; –20 uneven ground)
- Manage suit power (+10 spare cells; –20 low charge)
- Absorb impacts (+10 braced; –20 flank hit)
- Interface with HUD (+10 trained; –20 EMP interference)
- Emergency egress (+10 calm; –20 suit jam)

4) Zero-G Operations (Agility) — [Exploration] [Specialist]

Zero-G Operations is working and fighting without gravity: controlled movement, tether discipline, spatial orientation, and momentum management. It includes hull work, boarding actions, and rescue operations where one mistake becomes a drift into death. Use it any time “up” is meaningless and inertia is the real terrain. It's Specialist because untrained movement creates automatic Disadvantage and dangerous complications.

- Controlled movement (+10 handholds; –20 free drift)
- Breach and enter (–10 tight; –20 spinning target)
- Secure objects (+10 tether; –20 none)
- Fight in zero-G (–10; –20 if untrained opponent is trained)
- Repair outside hull (+10 mag boots; –20 debris)
- Rescue drifting person (+10 tether; –20 time pressure)

5) Piloting: Atmospheric (Awareness) – [Vehicle] [Specialist]

Atmospheric Piloting is flying aircraft and craft within an atmosphere—navigation, maneuvering, landing, and survival under weather and combat stress. It includes using guidance systems without becoming dependent on them. Use it for pursuit, extraction, insertions, and dogfight-style evasion. It's Specialist because speed, terrain, and system failures compress consequences into seconds.

- Low-altitude maneuver (+10 clear skies; –20 storms)
- Combat evasion (+10 ECM; –20 outgunned)
- Precision landing (+10 guidance; –20 damage)
- Pursuit/escape (+10 faster craft; –20 traffic)
- Fly by instruments (–10; –20 sensor noise)
- Emergency handling (+10 training; –20 catastrophic failure)

6) Piloting: Spacecraft (Awareness) – [Vehicle] [Specialist]

Spacecraft Piloting is command of a vessel in vacuum: docking, thrust vector control, engagement angles, and maintaining control during damage or spin. It includes coordination with sensors and gunnery, even in a two-person game where NPCs may fill stations. Use it for travel, combat positioning, and high-stakes maneuvers near hazards. It's Specialist because mistakes can strand you, vent you, or put you on an unrecoverable trajectory.

- Docking (+10 assists; –20 debris field)
- Burn timing (+10 nav solution; –20 rushed)
- Evasive maneuvers (+10 thruster health; –20 damaged)
- Gravity well navigation (+10 charts; –20 anomaly)
- Combat angles (+10 gunner sync; –20 solo)
- Emergency stabilization (+10 calm; –20 spin)

7) Sensors (Awareness) – [Tech] [Specialist]

Sensors is active detection and interpretation: scans, signatures, tracking locks, and distinguishing real threats from noise. It includes discipline—knowing when to scan hard and when to minimize emissions. Use it to detect stealth systems, life signs, anomalies, and incoming threats before they arrive. It's Specialist because spoofing, interference, and complex environments reward trained interpretation.

- Scan for life signs (+10 quiet environment; –20 interference)
- Identify ships (+10 clear signature; –20 spoofing)
- Detect stealth tech (–20; +10 pattern time)
- Track targets (+10 continuous lock; –20 clutter)
- Analyze anomalies (+10 lab tools; –10 field)
- Counter-scan discipline (+10 low emissions; –20 broadcasting)

8) Hacking (Intellect) — [Tech, Intrusion] [Specialist]

Futuristic Hacking is intrusion against hardened systems—identity spoofing, hostile control, exploit chains, and stealth persistence. It includes disabling security, hijacking drones, and manipulating networked infrastructure in real time. Use it when doors, cameras, and weapons are all software at heart. It's Specialist because countermeasures are aggressive, traces are lethal, and failure often escalates instantly.

- Crack access (–20 hardened; +10 stolen creds)
- Spoof ID (+10 clean template; –20 live challenge)
- Disable defenses (–10 consumer; –20 military)
- Evade detection (+10 slow careful; –20 rushed)
- Hijack drones (–20 encrypted; +10 known model)
- Exploit vulnerabilities (–10 old firmware; –20 patched)

9) Cybersecurity (Intellect) — [Tech] [Specialist]

Cybersecurity is defense: hardening systems, detecting intrusion, isolating threats, and restoring control without collapsing operations. It includes log analysis, network segmentation, and the ability to fight a digital battle while physical danger still exists. Use it to keep your ship, base, or suit from becoming hostile territory. It's Specialist because the defender's mistakes often aren't noticed until everything fails at once.

- Harden systems (+10 time; –20 under attack)
- Detect intrusion (+10 good logs; –20 spoofing)
- Trace attackers (+10 stable link; –20 relay hops)
- Quarantine outbreaks (+10 segmentation; –20 flat network)
- Restore from backups (+10 backups; –20 corrupted)
- Audit vulnerabilities (+10 tools; –20 legacy mess)

10) Engineering (Intellect) — [Tech, Craft] [Specialist]

Engineering is keeping advanced systems alive: power routing, structural integrity, emergency repairs, diagnostics, and safe improvisation. It covers “stop the cascade” moments—when one failure will trigger ten more. Use it in crises, during travel, and after combat to keep assets functional. It's Specialist because high-tech systems break in complex ways and demand correct choices under pressure.

- Repair systems (+10 proper bay; –20 field)
- Jury-rig power (+10 spare parts; –20 none)
- Reroute circuits (+10 schematics; –20 blind)
- Diagnose failures (+10 time; –20 alarms blaring)
- Prevent cascade breakdown (+10 early; –20 late)
- Design quick solutions (+10 calm; –20 combat)

11) Robotics (Intellect) — [Tech] [Specialist]

Robotics is building, repairing, and controlling drones, bots, and semi-autonomous systems. It includes reprogramming routines, overriding safeties (when authorized), diagnosing behavior, and countering hostile machine logic. Use it when your ally is mechanical—or your enemy is. It's Specialist because robotics failures are unpredictable: a "fixed" bot may still be wrong in dangerous ways.

- Repair drones (+10 parts; –20 none)
- Reprogram routines (+10 access; –20 locked)
- Build simple bot (+10 kit; –20 scrap only)
- Diagnose behavior (+10 logs; –20 wiped)
- Override safeties (–20; +10 authorized codes)
- Counter hostile bots (+10 familiarity; –20 unknown model)

12) Medicine: Advanced (Intellect) — [Medical] [Specialist]

Advanced Medicine covers medfoam, bio-scanners, neural stabilization, radiation treatment, and crisis interventions beyond basic first aid. It includes high-stakes procedures in non-sterile environments, including stasis or emergency surgery. Use it to prevent wounds from escalating into defeat, especially in harsh alien conditions. It's Specialist because advanced tools are powerful but unforgiving—misuse can worsen outcomes fast.

- Seal trauma fast (+10 medfoam; –20 under fire)
- Treat radiation (+10 early; –20 late)
- Neural stabilization (+10 proper tools; –20 field)
- Bio-scan diagnosis (+10 scanner; –20 interference)
- Surgery (–20 rushed; +10 sterile bay)
- Stasis/cryocare (+10 functioning pod; –20 damaged pod)

13) Survival: Alien Environments (Awareness) — [Survival]

Alien Survival is staying alive where your instincts are unreliable: unknown weather systems, toxic biology, and environmental hazards that don't follow Earth rules. It includes suit discipline, hazard recognition, safe route selection, and preventing exposure from becoming catastrophe. Use it to keep travel scenes tense but survivable. It rewards preparation and scanning; ignorance imposes harsh Disadvantage quickly.

- Identify safe zones (+10 scans; –20 unknown)
- Manage suit systems (+10 training; –20 panic)
- Find water/air (+10 known biosigns; –20 barren)
- Navigate hazards (+10 daylight; –20 storms)
- Avoid predators (+10 sensors; –20 stealth fauna)
- Build shelter/heat (+10 materials; –20 none)

14) Diplomacy (Presence) – [Social]

Diplomacy is formal negotiation and conflict defusal across factions, worlds, and species—protocol, leverage, and reading what others value. It includes first-contact caution, treaty-making, and ensuring everyone leaves a room believing they won something. Use it to prevent wars, gain access, and build alliances that matter later. Diplomacy is not Persuasion “but bigger”—it carries political weight, and missteps can create systemic enemies.

- Negotiate treaties (+10 leverage; –20 insulted counterpart)
- De-escalate hostile contact (+10 calm; –20 weapons hot)
- Manage first contact (+10 protocols; –20 cultural ignorance)
- Read power dynamics (+10 observation; –10 rushed)
- Secure access rights (+10 offers; –20 no incentive)
- Handle councils (+10 allies; –20 isolation)

15) Deception (Presence) – [Social]

Futuristic Deception includes forged credentials, spoofed identities, sensor misdirection, and maintaining cover in surveillance-heavy societies. It blends social lying with technical plausibility—your story must match the data. Use it to bypass checkpoints, mislead investigations, and escape consequence webs. Deception becomes harder against biometrics and networked records unless you also control the systems.

- Fake credentials (+10 forged ID; –20 biometric checks)
- Misdirect sensors (+10 spoof tools; –20 active scan)
- Bluff in negotiation (+10 confidence; –20 expert)
- Conceal intent (+10 partial truths; –20 interrogation)
- Plant false data (+10 access; –20 locked)
- Run cover story (+10 consistent; –20 prior exposure)

16) Command (Presence) – [Social, Combat]

Command is leadership in a high-tech environment: clear orders, resource prioritization, and coordination when communication can be jammed or compromised. It includes directing NPC crews, drone swarms, or allied units while keeping the Companion integrated and safe. Use it to keep multi-

front scenes readable and to stabilize morale under cosmic pressure. Command is strongest when it creates simplicity—confusion is the enemy that kills.

- Coordinate teams (+10 comms; –20 jammed)
- Maintain morale (+10 inspiration; –20 casualties)
- Allocate resources (+10 time; –20 crisis)
- Issue clear orders (+10 discipline; –20 panic)
- Direct Companion effectively (+10 Bond; –10 strained)
- Hold line under fire (+10 cover; –20 exposed)

17) Resolve (Presence) — [Mental]

Resolve is mental stability against fear, isolation, trauma, and psychic pressure—especially in environments that erode identity. It includes holding focus under pain, resisting compulsion, and staying functional when the void gets inside your thoughts. Use it for horror-adjacent moments, interrogation, and psionic resistance when applicable. Resolve is often the line between “I act” and “I break.”

- Resist fear (+10 support; –20 cosmic horror)
- Withstand psychic pressure (+10 training; –20 exhausted)
- Hold focus under pain (+10 meds; –20 severe wound)
- Ignore taunts (+10 calm; –20 personal trigger)
- Resist compulsion (+10 anchor; –20 isolation)
- Stay steady in vacuum panic (–20; +10 drill training)

18) Xenology (Intellect) — [Knowledge]

Xenology is the study of alien life and behavior—biology, ecology, and the patterns that predict what a creature or culture will do next. It includes identifying hazards, interpreting alien artifacts through biological context, and recognizing when “normal” assumptions are deadly. Use it to turn the unknown into informed risk. Xenology is strongest with observation time; rushed conclusions create false confidence and Disadvantage.

- Identify species traits (+10 database; –20 unknown)
- Predict behavior (+10 observation; –20 no data)
- Interpret artifacts (+10 lab; –20 field)
- Understand ecosystems (+10 time; –20 crisis)
- Recognize biohazards (+10 scan; –20 stealth toxin)
- Decode cultural patterns (+10 samples; –20 single encounter)

19) Astrogation (Intellect) — [Vehicle, Tech] [Specialist]

Astrogation is plotting safe travel through space: routes, hazards, gravity wells, interdiction zones, and timing that keeps you alive. It includes jump calculations (if your setting uses them), emergency course

correction, and avoiding predictable intercepts. Use it to keep the ship from becoming a coffin. It's Specialist because errors are unforgiving—wrong math can strand you far from help.

- Plot safe routes (+10 charts; –20 anomalies)
- Calculate jumps/burns (+10 time; –20 rushed)
- Avoid interdiction (+10 intel; –20 blind)
- Slingshot maneuvers (+10 practice; –20 damaged nav)
- Navigate hazards (+10 sensors; –20 sensor noise)
- Emergency course correction (+10 calm; –20 combat)

20) Electronic Warfare (Intellect) — [Tech, Combat] [Specialist]

Electronic Warfare is fighting through signals: jamming, spoofing, breaking locks, masking emissions, and countering enemy interference. It includes balancing power and stealth—too much broadcasting makes you a beacon, too little makes you blind. Use it to tilt battles without firing a shot. It's Specialist because EW is a knife fight in invisible space: small advantages snowball quickly.

- Jam comms (+10 strong signal; –20 hardened)
- Break locks (+10 power; –20 stealth requirement)
- Spoof IFF (+10 template; –20 live challenge)
- Counter-jam (+10 tools; –20 inferior rig)
- Blind sensors (–10 civilian; –20 military)
- Mask emissions (+10 discipline; –20 panic broadcast)

21) Investigation (Intellect) — [Investigation]

Futuristic Investigation includes logs, sensor records, database trails, shipment paths, and reconstructing events across networks. It focuses on verifying truth in an age of spoofing, deep falsification, and fragmented evidence. Use it to determine what actually happened before you commit to a plan. Investigation becomes more reliable when paired with Cybersecurity or Sensors to validate sources.

- Analyze logs (+10 intact; –20 scrubbed)
- Reconstruct events (+10 multiple sources; –20 single trace)
- Cross-check identities (+10 database; –20 restricted)
- Find inconsistencies (+10 calm; –20 rushed)
- Track shipments (+10 access; –20 black market)
- Link suspects (+10 patterns; –20 disinfo)

22) Stealth (Agility) — [Exploration]

Futuristic Stealth is moving unseen against cameras, drones, thermal reads, and automated suspicion systems. It includes route selection, signature discipline, and timing movement between surveillance

sweeps. Use it to infiltrate facilities and survive when direct confrontation is suicidal. Stealth is often a contest against systems, not people—failure may start Clocks rather than immediate combat.

- Move quietly (+10 soft surfaces; –20 metal grates)
- Avoid cameras (+10 blind spots; –20 wide coverage)
- Sneak in suits (+10 slim profile; –20 bulky gear)
- Lose drones (+10 clutter; –20 open hangar)
- Conceal heat signature (–20 without tech; +10 with dampeners)
- Silent takedowns (–10 alert; +10 unaware)

23) Boarding Operations (Might/Agility) — [Combat, Exploration]

Boarding Operations is close-quarters action in ships and stations: breaching, corridor clearing, hostage control, and avoiding hull compromise. It emphasizes speed, discipline, and environmental danger—one stray shot can become decompression. Use it when the battlefield is cramped, vertical, and lethal. It rewards careful tactics and punishes chaos more than almost any other combat field.

- Breach doors (+10 tools; –20 reinforced)
- Clear corridors (+10 training; –20 ambush)
- Secure hostages (+10 planning; –20 chaos)
- Fight in low gravity (–10; –20 if drifting)
- Control choke points (+20; –10 open spaces)
- Prevent hull compromise (+10 caution; –20 explosive risk)

24) Fabrication (Intellect) — [Craft]

Fabrication is building and repairing with advanced tools: printers, repair gels, modular parts, and field kits. It includes modifying equipment, producing emergency components, and reinforcing weak points quickly. Use it to turn scarce time into functional gear and to keep resources from collapsing. Fabrication depends on material availability—good feedstock grants Advantage; scavenging imposes Disadvantage.

- Print parts (+10 proper printer; –20 improvised)
- Patch suits (+10 repair gel; –20 none)
- Build tools (+10 materials; –20 scrap)
- Reinforce structures (+10 time; –20 alarms)
- Modify equipment (+10 bench; –20 field)
- Identify counterfeit parts (+10 inspection; –10 rushed)

25) Tradecraft (Awareness) — [Social, Investigation]

Tradecraft is covert operations skill: handling contacts, dead drops, pattern avoidance, detecting tails, and secure communication habits. It's the difference between "we're hidden" and "we haven't been found"

yet.” Use it in espionage scenes, infiltration campaigns, and survival under surveillance states. Tradecraft rewards discipline; sloppy routines create predictable vulnerabilities.

- Handle contacts (+10 reputation; –20 unknown)
- Dead drops (+10 planning; –20 surveillance)
- Secure comms (+10 protocols; –20 sloppy)
- Detect tails (+10 time; –20 chaos)
- Operate under cover (+10 prepared identity; –20 sudden check)
- Avoid patterning (+10 discipline; –20 routine)

26) Psionic Aptitude (Presence) — [Mystic/Psi] [Specialist]

Psionic Aptitude is the capacity to focus, channel, and resist psionic exertion—discipline, clarity, and mental endurance. It governs the roll for psychic effects defined later in modules and supports resisting intrusion or compulsion when psionics are present. Use it for sensing disturbances, maintaining control, and pushing against psychic pressure. It’s Specialist because untrained minds suffer dangerous backlash, instability, or narrative consequences.

- Resist psychic intrusion (+10 training; –20 exhausted)
- Sense disturbances (+10 quiet; –20 noisy crowd)
- Focus mental effort (+10 calm; –20 wounded)
- Establish contact (–10 familiarity; –20 alien mind)
- Maintain discipline (+10 ritual habit; –20 panic)
- Channel safely (+10 guidance; –20 emotional spike)

(Specific psychic abilities are defined later in modules; this skill governs using and resisting psionic exertion.)

27) Occult / Anomalies (Intellect) — [Mystic]

Occult/Anomalies is knowledge of the strange: nonstandard physics, cursed tech, inexplicable phenomena, and the folklore that sometimes turns out to be true. It helps you recognize warning signs and apply containment protocols before reality gets worse. Use it when “science as usual” fails and you need a model—any model—to act intelligently. It doesn’t replace Engineering or Xenology; it fills the gap when the situation refuses to behave.

- Recognize anomalous signs (+10 references; –20 unknown)
- Interpret phenomena (+10 lab; –10 field)
- Predict danger patterns (+10 time; –20 crisis)
- Identify cursed tech (+10 scan; –20 masked)
- Contain weird events (+10 protocols; –20 improvisation)
- Recall factions/legends (+10 database; –10 rumor-only)

Editor Note:

Compatibility Rule (All Sets): You may freely mix skills across sets. A Protagonist can have *Spellcraft + Firearms + Piloting* on the same sheet with no rules conflict.

Genre Gear Determines Practicality (Not Permission): The skill can exist; the gear or situation determines whether it's relevant.

Specialist Skills Gate Expertise: Marked [**Specialist**]. If you don't have it, you generally can't attempt it (or attempt at **10%** with severe consequences—Director's call).

Spell/Psi Specifics Live in Modules: Spellcraft, Ritual, Psionic Aptitude provide the chassis. Specific spells/powers are built later as actions/effects that plug into **Contests**, **Advantage/Disadvantage**, and **Destiny**.

Appendix B: Equipment Lists by Genre

A. UNIVERSAL ITEM STAT LINE (USED IN ALL GENRES)

Weapon Line

Name — Skill, Tags, Damage, Range, Traits

- **Damage:** Roll the listed dice on a hit; apply Armor/DR as your core rules specify.
- **Range Bands (suggested):** *Reach* (touch), *Close* (room), *Near* (street), *Far* (field), *Extreme* (sniper/ship).
- **Traits:** Short keywords to trigger Advantage/Disadvantage and special rulings.

Armor Line

Name — Tags, DR, Penalties, Traits

- **DR (Damage Reduction):** Subtract from incoming damage (or convert to wound mitigation per your Wound rules).
- **Penalties:** Commonly to Stealth/Agility tests in heavy gear.

Gear Line

Name — Tags, Uses, Traits

- “Uses” can be literal charges (torches, medkits) or narrative supplies (rope).

Director Tip (Speed): Don’t overstat everything. If the fiction doesn’t care, assign **Standard** gear and move on. Reserve “special” stat lines for gear that changes choices.

Common Misuse: If a character lacks the right **[Specialist]** skill, don’t let gear become a loophole. A lockpick set doesn’t grant Lockpicking; a starship console doesn’t grant Piloting; Spacecraft.

Great With: Gear is a clean way to express **Advantage/Disadvantage**.

Good optics = +10, improvised tools = -10, unstable prototype = +20 with a complication on doubles (Director’s call).

B. EQUIPMENT LISTS

B1. MEDIEVAL / FANTASY EQUIPMENT

Weapons (Melee)

Dagger — *Blades*, [Melee, Light], **1d4**, Reach, *Concealable; Off-Hand*

Short Sword — *Blades*, [Melee], **1d6**, Reach, *Reliable*

Longsword — *Blades*, [Melee], **1d8**, Reach, *Versatile; Two-Hand +10 Damage (Director’s call)*

Greatsword — *Blades*, [Melee, Heavy], **1d12**, Reach, *Two-Hand; -10 in tight spaces*

Mace — *Blunt Weapons*, [Melee], **1d8**, Reach, *Armor Breaker (+10 vs heavy armor)*

Warhammer — *Blunt Weapons*, [Melee], **1d10**, Reach, *Armor Breaker; Loud*

Club — *Blunt Weapons*, [Melee, Improvised], **1d6**, Reach, *Common; -10 if poorly balanced*

Spear — *Polearms*, [Melee, Reach], **1d8**, Near, *Set vs Charge (+20 when braced)*

Halberd — *Polearms*, [Melee, Reach, Heavy], **1d10**, Near, *Hook/Trip (Director’s call)*

Quarterstaff — *Polearms* or *Blunt Weapons*, [Melee], **1d6**, Reach, *Defensive (+10 to parry-style rulings)*

Shield (Round/Kite) — *Shields*, [Defense], —, —, *Block; Bash 1d6; Cover +10 vs arrows when braced*

Weapons (Ranged)

Shortbow — *Archery*, [Ranged], **1d6**, Near, *Quiet; -10 in rain/wind*

Longbow — *Archery*, [Ranged], **1d8**, Far, *Powerful; requires space*

Crossbow — *Archery*, [Ranged], **1d8**, Far, *Reload (action); +10 vs armor at Close/Near*

Sling — *Archery*, [Ranged, Cheap], **1d4**, Near, *Ammo common; -10 vs armored*

Thrown Axe — *Archery*, [Ranged], **1d6**, Close, *Loud; recoverable (Director’s call)*

Armor & Shields

Padded / Gambeson — [Armor], **DR 1**, *No Stealth penalty; cheap warmth*

Leather Armor — [Armor], **DR 2**, *–10 Stealth if creaky*

Chain Shirt — [Armor], **DR 3**, *–10 Stealth; good coverage*

Scale / Brigandine — [Armor], **DR 4**, *–20 Stealth; bulky*

Plate Armor — [Armor, Heavy], **DR 6**, *–30 Stealth; –10 Athletics; terrifying presence (+10 Intimidation in court)*

Helmet — [Armor], **DR +1** (vs head/precision calls), *–10 Awareness in narrow vision (Director's call)*

Adventuring Gear (General)

Backpack Kit — [Gear], *bedroll, flint, needle/thread, reduces "forgot it" penalties*

Rope (50 ft) — [Gear], *climb/secure, +10 Athletics when anchored well*

Grappling Hook — [Gear], *entry/climb, +10 in stonework; –10 in soft wood*

Torches (x3) — [Gear], *light, smoke attracts trouble (Director's Clock)*

Lantern + Oil — [Gear], *light, wind-resistant; oil is a hazard*

Lockpicks (simple) — [Tool], *Thievery, required for locks; breaks on critical failure*

Crowbar — [Tool], *leverage, +10 to force doors; loud*

Field Rations (3 days) — [Supply], *hunger control, spoils in wet*

Waterskin — [Supply], *hydration, critical in heat*

Healing & Craft

Healer's Kit — [Medical], *Healing, +10 to stabilize if supplies available*

Herbal Pouch — [Medical], *Herbalism, +10 when local plants are known*

Smith's Tools — [Craft], *Smithing, required for meaningful repairs*

Leatherworking Kit — [Craft], *Wood/Leather, patches armor/straps*

Mystic & Rare (Fantasy Utility)

Spell Focus (Wand/Staff/Ring) — [Mystic], *Spellcraft, +10 to controlled casting; obvious to Arcane Lore*

Ritual Chalk + Salt — [Mystic], *Ritual, creates circles/wards; consumes uses*

Blessed Charm — [Mystic], —, *1/session: +10 Resolve vs fear/curses (Director approval)*

Alchemist's Fire (flask) — [Consumable], *Siege & Demolition, 2d6, Close, Burning; dangerous in packs*

Smoke Pot — [Consumable], *Siege & Demolition or Thievery, creates –20 visibility zone for 1–3 rounds*

B2. MODERN EQUIPMENT

Weapons (Firearms) — [Specialist]

Compact Pistol — *Firearms*, [Ranged], **1d10**, *Close/Near, Concealable; Reload*

Service Pistol — *Firearms*, [Ranged], **1d10+1d4**, *Close/Near, Reliable; Reload*

Shotgun — *Firearms*, [Ranged], **2d8**, *Close, Brutal close; –20 at Far*

Carbine / Rifle — *Firearms*, [Ranged], **2d6**, *Near/Far, Stable; Reload*

Sniper Rifle — *Firearms*, [Ranged, Precision], **1d12+1d8**, *Far/Extreme, Setup (+10 after 1 aim action)*

SMG — *Firearms*, [Ranged], **2d6**, *Close/Near, Burst (+10 to hit, +Clock on ammo)*

Weapons (Close)

Combat Knife — *CQC*, [Melee, Light], **1d6**, *Reach, Concealable*

Baton — *CQC*, [Melee], **1d6**, *Reach, Nonlethal option; +10 to restrain rulings*

Taser — *CQC*, [Tech], **1d4 + Stun**, *Close, Stun on hit (Director sets duration)*

Pepper Spray — *CQC or First Response*, [Control], —, *Close, Target suffers –20 next action (eyes/breath)*

Armor & Protection

Soft Armor Vest — [Armor], **DR 2**, *-10 Stealth if bulky; concealable variants exist*

Hard Plate Carrier — [Armor], **DR 4**, *-20 Stealth; -10 Athletics*

Ballistic Helmet — [Armor], **DR +1**, *-10 Awareness in tight vision*

Gas Mask — [Gear], *resist smoke/chemicals; -10 Persuasion unless trained presence*

Tools & Tech

Flashlight (tactical) — [Gear], *+10 search in darkness; can reveal you*

Binoculars — [Gear], *+10 spotting at range*

Radio/Comms — [Gear], *team coordination; jam risk*

Handcuffs / Zip Ties — [Gear], *enables restraint outcomes after CQC wins*

Lockpick Set — [Tool], *Lockpicking [Specialist], required*

Laptop — [Tool], *Computers/Hacking, advantage if proper access*

Signal Scanner — [Tool], *Surveillance, +10 to find transmitters; -10 in noisy cities*

Drone (consumer) — [Tool], *Surveillance, +10 aerial recon; fragile*

Breaching Charges — [Tool], *Demolitions [Specialist], 2d10, Close, loud; collateral risk*

Tool Kit (mechanic) — [Tool], *Mechanics, required for meaningful repair*

First Aid Kit — [Medical], *Medicine, +10 to stabilize if available*

Trauma Kit — [Medical], *Medicine, +20 to stabilize; limited uses*

Utility & Field

Climbing Kit — [Gear], *+10 Athletics for climbs; heavy*

Cold Weather Gear — [Gear], *+10 Endurance vs cold exposure*

Night Vision — [Gear], *+20 in darkness; -10 in bright flash*

Thermal Imager — [Gear], *+10 to detect hidden living targets; fooled by insulation*

B3. FUTURISTIC EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING SCIENCE-FANTASY)

Weapons (Energy/Kinetic) — [Specialist]

Laser Pistol — *Energy Weapons*, [Ranged], **2d6**, *Close/Near, Silent-ish; Heat build (Director Clock)*

Laser Carbine — *Energy Weapons*, [Ranged], **2d8**, *Near/Far, Accurate; Heat build*

Plasma Projector — *Energy Weapons*, [Ranged, Heavy], **3d8**, *Close/Near, Splash (minor collateral); -10 to stealth*

Coil Rifle — *Kinetic Weapons*, [Ranged], **2d10**, *Near/Far, Armor punch; loud*

Smart SMG — *Kinetic Weapons*, [Ranged], **2d8**, *Close/Near, Burst (+10 to hit); ammo Clock*

Rail Sniper — *Kinetic Weapons*, [Precision], **1d20+1d12**, *Far/Extreme, Setup (+10 after aim); catastrophic on crit*

Weapons (Science-Fantasy Hybrids)

Runeblade (Monofilament + Sigils) — *Blades or Energy Weapons (module choice)*, **1d12**, *Reach, Ignores 1-2 DR on hit (Director)*

Spellgun "Wandcaster" — *Spellcraft [Specialist]*, **2d6**, *Near, Casts module-defined bolt effects; miscast risks on failure*

Void Lance — *Energy Weapons*, **3d10**, *Near/Far, Disruptive: on hit, target suffers -10 next tech action*

Psi-Edge Knife — *CQC/Blades*, **1d8**, *Reach, Great With Psionic Aptitude (adds +10 in psionic contests)*

Armor & Shields

Combat Suit — [Armor], **DR 2**, *sealed; +10 vs environment*

Hardshell Armor — [Armor], **DR 4**, *-10 Stealth; modular*

Powered Armor Frame — *Powered Armor [Specialist]*, [Armor], **DR 6**, *-20 Stealth; boosts heavy weapon use*

Personal Shield Belt — [Tech], *1/scene: negate one hit OR reduce damage by half (Director chooses)*

Arcane-Flux Cloak — [Mystic], **DR 3**, *+10 Stealth in darkness; interferes with Sensors (-10)*

Tools, Systems, and Survival

HUD Visor — [Gear], +10 Tactical Awareness; -10 when EMP/noise

Medfoam Injector — [Medical], Medicine: Advanced [Specialist], +20 stabilize; limited uses

Bio-Scanner — [Medical], +10 diagnose; -10 under interference

Repair Gel / Nanopatch — [Tool], Fabrication, quick fixes; limited uses

Omni-Tool — [Tool], Engineering/Fabrication, counts as required tools in the field

Drone (tactical) — [Tool], Robotics [Specialist], recon/assist; can be targeted

Signal Spike — [Tool], Electronic Warfare

[Specialist], jam zone: impose -20 to enemy comms/sensors nearby

Star-Map Module — [Tool], Astrogation [Specialist], +10 plotting; fails in anomalies

Void Tether — [Gear], Zero-G Ops, prevents drift death; grants +10 rescues

Environmental Suit — [Gear], Survival: Alien Environments, required for toxic worlds; bulky -10 Stealth

Relic Battery (Aether Cell) — [Tech/Mystic], powers tech OR rituals; unstable—on doubles, complication

Appendix C: Vehicle Lists by Genre

C0. UNIVERSAL VEHICLE STAT LINE

Vehicle Name — Tags, **Speed**, **Handling**, **Armor/DR**, **Hull**, Capacity, Traits

- **Speed:** how fast it closes/escapes in chases (Director sets chase Clocks).
- **Handling:** a $\pm$ to Driving/Piloting rolls (commonly +10 for nimble, -10/-20 for heavy).
- **Hull:** how many “serious hits” it can take before disabled (use Wound logic or track as a simple number).

Director Tip (Chases): Run chases as **Contests** with Clocks. A mutual failure still produces a **Lesser Win**: someone gains ground, but pays for it (scraped vehicle, lost line-of-sight, collateral, etc.).

C1. MEDIEVAL / FANTASY VEHICLES (Mounts & Conveyances)

Riding Horse — [Mount], Speed 3, Handling +10, DR 0, Hull 2, 1 rider, *Spooks; needs Riding*

Warhorse — [Mount], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 1, Hull 3, 1 rider, *Charge impact; intimidating*

Pack Mule — [Mount], Speed 2, Handling +0, DR 0, Hull 2, cargo heavy, *Stubborn; Beast Handling helpful*

Cart (hand/animal) — [Wagon], Speed 1-2, Handling -10, DR 0, Hull 2, cargo, *Breaks on bad terrain*

Wagon (covered) — [Wagon], Speed 2, Handling -20, DR 1, Hull 3, crew 1-2 + passengers, *Mobile shelter*

Riverboat — [Boat], Speed 2, Handling -10, DR 0, Hull 3, crew 2+, *Depends on current*

Sailing Ship — [Ship], Speed 3, Handling -10, DR 2, Hull 6, crew 10+, *Weather matters; boarding scenes*

Longship — [Ship], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 1,

Hull 5, crew 20+, *Fast landings; raids*

Airship (Fantasy Gasbag) — [Air], Speed 2, Handling -20, DR 1, Hull 5, crew 6+, *Fragile; storms are lethal*

C2. MODERN VEHICLES

Motorcycle — [Ground], Speed 4, Handling +20, DR 0, Hull 2, 1-2, *Fast; risky in crashes*

Sedan — [Ground], Speed 3, Handling +10, DR 1, Hull 3, 4-5, *Common; blends in*

SUV/Truck — [Ground], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 2, Hull 4, 4-6, *Off-road capable*

Armored Van — [Ground], Speed 2, Handling -10, DR 4, Hull 5, 6-10, *Hard to stop; obvious*

Helicopter — [Air], Speed 4, Handling -10, DR 1, Hull 4, crew 2 + passengers, *Loud; needs skilled pilot*

Small Plane — [Air], Speed 4, Handling -10, DR 0, Hull 4, crew 1-2 + passengers, *Range matters*

Speedboat — [Water], Speed 4, Handling +10, DR 0, Hull 3, crew 1-2 + passengers, *Fast escapes*

Patrol Boat — [Water], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 2, Hull 4, crew 3+, *Stability; spotlight*

ATV — [Ground], Speed 3, Handling +10, DR 0, Hull 2, 1-2, *Terrain flexible*

Drone Swarm (support) — [Air/Tech], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 0, Hull 2, *Surveillance tool—treat as vehicle when targeted*

C3. FUTURISTIC VEHICLES (INCLUDING SCIENCE-FANTASY)

Grav Bike — [Ground/Anti-Gravity], Speed 5, Handling +20, DR 1, Hull 2, 1-2, *Silent-ish; fragile*

Armored Hover APC — [Ground/Anti-Gravity], Speed 3, Handling -10, DR 5, Hull 6, squad, *Hard to stop*

Mech Walker (light) — [Walker], Speed 2, Handling -10, DR 6, Hull 6, 1, *Powered Armor synergy*

Dropship — [Air/Space], Speed 4, Handling -10, DR 4, Hull 6, crew 2 + squad, *Insertion platform*

Scout Shuttle — [Space], Speed 4, Handling +0, DR 3, Hull 5, crew 1-2 + passengers, *Versatile*

Freighter (small) — [Space], Speed 2, Handling

–20, DR 4, Hull 8, crew 4+, *Cargo; slow turns*

Corvette — [Space], Speed 3, Handling –10, DR 6, Hull 10, crew 20+, *Combat vessel*

Stellar Skiff (Science-Fantasy) —

[Space/Mystic], Speed 3, Handling +0, DR 3, Hull 6, crew 3+, *Runs on relic cells; rituals steer in anomalies*

Worm-Saddle (Void Drake Mount) — [Living Craft], Speed 4, Handling +10, DR 4, Hull 6, 1 rider, *Beast Handling + Psionic synergy*

Astral Sled — [Mystic], Speed 3, Handling +10, DR 2, Hull 4, 1–3, *Moves through “thin places”; risks anomalies*

Appendix D: Bestiaries by Genre

D0. UNIVERSAL CREATURE STAT LINE

Creature — Threat (1–5), **Defense** (or “avoidance”), **DR**, **Wounds/Hull**, Attacks, Traits

- **Threat** is a fast dial for Directors: 1 = nuisance, 3 = serious fight, 5 = boss-tier.
- **Defense** can be a fixed % (typical dodge/parry skill) or an Attribute-based benchmark.
- **Wounds/Hull** can be handled via your Wound system; treat the listed value as “how many meaningful hits” it can take.

Director Tip (One-on-One): Most fights should be **1–3 Antagonists**, not a mob. Increase Threat or add a Companion-support complication instead of adding bodies.

Common Misuse: Don’t over-roll. If an enemy’s attack is “trivial,” just apply a Light Wound or a narrative cost on a failed defense—keep the scene moving.

D1. MEDIEVAL / FANTASY BESTIARY (Generic)

Wolf Pack — Threat 2, Defense 45%, DR 0, Wounds 2 each
Attacks: *Bite 45% (1d6), Trip on strong hit*
Traits: *Pack Tactics (+10 when 2+ wolves threaten)*

Dire Wolf — Threat 3, Defense 55%, DR 1, Wounds 4
Attacks: *Bite 55% (1d10), Maul*
Traits: *Fear in peasants (+10 Intimidation when present)*

Boar — Threat 2, Defense 35%, DR 1, Wounds 3
Attacks: *Tusk 45% (1d8), Charge*
Traits: *Relentless; ignores first “scare-off” attempt*

Bandit — Threat 2, Defense 40%, DR 1–2, Wounds 2

Attacks: *Blade 45% (1d6) or Bow 40% (1d6)*

Traits: *Cowardly unless leader present*

Bandit Captain — Threat 3, Defense 55%, DR 2–3, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Blade 60% (1d8), Command*

Traits: *Orders allies (+10 to their next roll if obeyed)*

Skeleton — Threat 2, Defense 40%, DR 2, Wounds 3

Attacks: *Rusty Blade 45% (1d6)*

Traits: *Fearless; vulnerable to bludgeoning (+10 to hit vs it)*

Ghoul — Threat 3, Defense 50%, DR 1, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Claws 55% (1d6), Paralysis on strong hit (Director)*

Traits: *Stench (–10 to Persuasion/Focus nearby)*

Ogre — Threat 4, Defense 35%, DR 3, Wounds 6

Attacks: *Club 60% (1d12), Throw rock (1d10)*

Traits: *Huge; –10 to be tripped; loud*

Wyvern — Threat 5, Defense 55%, DR 4, Wounds 8

Attacks: *Bite 60% (1d12), Tail 55% (1d10), Venom (Director)*

Traits: *Flight; terror; hit-and-run*

Sorcerer (NPC) — Threat 4, Defense 40%, DR 1, Wounds 3

Attacks: *Spellcraft 65% (module spells)*

Traits: *Counterspell attempt; fragile if pinned*

D2. MODERN BESTIARY (Generic Threats)

Guard Dog — Threat 2, Defense 50%, DR 0, Wounds 2

Attacks: *Bite 55% (1d6)*

Traits: *Alarm; tracks scent (+10 Tracking/Fieldcraft checks against you)*

Street Gang Member — Threat 2, Defense 35%, DR 1, Wounds 2

Attacks: *Pistol 40% (1d10) or Knife 45% (1d6)*

Traits: *Breaks under pressure; flees on fear*

Trained Enforcer — Threat 3, Defense 50%, DR 2, Wounds 3

Attacks: *Firearms 55% (2d6), CQC 50% (1d6)*

Traits: *Uses cover; tactical discipline*

SWAT / Tactical Officer — Threat 4, Defense 60%, DR 4, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Rifle 65% (2d6), Flashbang (Director)*

Traits: *Team coordination; entry tactics*

Sniper — Threat 4, Defense 45%, DR 1, Wounds 2

Attacks: *Sniper 70% (1d12+1d8)*

Traits: *Setup (+10 after aim); relocates on failure*

Security Drone (small) — Threat 3, Defense 55%, DR 1, Wounds 3

Attacks: *Shock 55% (1d6 + stun)*

Traits: *Camera; calls backup on mutual failure “lesser win”*

Bear — Threat 4, Defense 40%, DR 2, Wounds 6

Attacks: *Claw 55% (1d10), Bite 55% (1d10)*

Traits: *Territorial; ignores intimidation if hungry*

Occult Entity (Urban Haunt) — Threat 4, Defense 60%, DR 3, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Fear 65% (Resolve contest)*

Traits: *Intangible; harmed by specific methods (Director sets)*

D3. FUTURISTIC BESTIARY (INCLUDING SCIENCE-FANTASY)

Scout Drone — Threat 2, Defense 55%, DR 0, Wounds 2

Attacks: *Light Laser 45% (1d6)*

Traits: *Marks targets (+10 to allies who shoot marked target)*

Assault Drone — Threat 3, Defense 60%, DR 2, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Pulse Rifle 60% (2d8)*

Traits: *Suppression; immune to fear*

Cyber-Hound — Threat 3, Defense 55%, DR 2, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Bite 60% (1d10), Shock (–10 next action)*

Traits: *Tracks heat/scent; leaps*

Alien Stalker — Threat 4, Defense 65%, DR 1, Wounds 5

Attacks: *Claws 70% (2d6), Ambush*

Traits: *Cloak (Stealth +20 until revealed)*

Hive-Swarm (microdrones or insects) — Threat 4, Defense 50%, DR 0, Wounds 6 (swarm)

Attacks: *Swarm 60% (1d12), Disrupt (–10 to tech actions)*

Traits: *Area threat; fire/EM works well*

Void Leech — Threat 3, Defense 45%, DR 1, Wounds 4

Attacks: *Latch 55% (1d8), drains power/resolve (Director)*

Traits: *Clings to hull/suits; hard to notice*

Psi-Wraith — Threat 5, Defense 70%, DR 4, Wounds 6

Attacks: *Mind Lance 75% (Resolve/Psionic contest)*

Traits: *Ignores normal armor; harmed by psionic/mystic methods*

Astral Fae Marauder (Science-Fantasy) —

Threat 4, Defense 65%, DR 2, Wounds 5

Attacks: *Runeblade 70% (1d12), Glamour (Deception contest)*

Traits: *Reality-bending tricks; bargains on lesser wins*

Techno-Lich (Science-Fantasy Boss) — Threat 5, Defense 60%, DR 5, Wounds 8

Attacks: *Void Lance 70% (3d10), Drone call (Clock)*

Traits: *Phylactery-core; “dies” unless core destroyed*

Void Drake (Science-Fantasy Apex) — Threat 5, Defense 55%, DR 6, Wounds 10

Attacks: *Bite 70% (1d20), Breath: Void Arc (3d12)*

Traits: *Flight; terror; reality-shear (Director sets complication on doubles)*

Editor’s Note:

SCIENCE-FANTASY INTEGRATION NOTES (FUTURISTIC SETS)

Science-Fantasy gear and creatures follow the same engine:

- They still use **d100 Skills**, **Advantage/Disadvantage**, **Contests**, and **Destiny Points**.
- The “fantasy” part is expressed through **Traits** (reality distortion, curses, glamours) and through **module-defined powers** that roll via **Spellcraft**, **Ritual**, or **Psionic Aptitude**.

Director Tip: In mixed-tech scenes, use **Lesser Wins** aggressively.

Example: the Protagonist fails to hack a warded door, but gets a lesser win—door opens *partway* and triggers a guardian Clock.

Appendix E: Companion Templates

MEDIEVAL/FANTASY Companions

Tamsin Reedveil — Quick-Sworn Squire

Archetype: Squire / Retainer

Personality & Quirks: Earnest, brave in bursts, talks too fast when afraid. Keeps a “vow list” on scraps of parchment and adds new vows impulsively.

Role in the Duo: Practical backup and moral compass; always ready with rope, oil, and hard-earned caution.

Key Ratings (pick what matters at your table):

- **Melee 45%** (short sword, shield discipline)
- **Athletics 40%** (climb, haul, hold doors)
- **Awareness 50%** (spot ambush signs, read rooms)
- **First Aid 45%** (*or Medicine if your fantasy list uses it*)
- **Presence 35%** (respectful but not commanding)

Signature Traits (1–3):

- **Shield at Your Side:** When Tamsin **Screens**, describe a physical interposition (shield, shove, brace).
- **Field Bandager:** When you attempt stabilization, Tamsin can **Assist** even without ideal tools (still respects circumstance penalties).
- **Oathbound:** Tamsin won’t abandon innocents; their presence can create a social **Anchor** against cruelty or panic.

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** Calls openings in melee, steadies your aim with a lantern, reminds you of terrain and exits.
- **Screen (reduce Outnumbered one step):** Holds a doorway, blocks a spear thrust, draws one attacker’s attention.
- **Anchor (Clock control):** Keeps watch during rest, holds a torch steady, braces a weakening door, slows “Pursuit” Clocks by smart route choices.

Personal Gear:

- Small shield (buckler), short sword, padded jack, coil of rope, iron spikes, oil flask, tinderbox, bandage roll, wax-seal kit for messages, a tarnished signet ring from a lost household.

Moth-of-Ash — Whisper Familiar

Archetype: Familiar / Scout Spirit

Personality & Quirks: Curious, easily distracted by bright magic, offended by salt. Communicates by tugging hair, tapping objects, and flickering through shadows.

Role in the Duo: Reconnaissance, omen-reading, and subtle scene control; more “presence” than “fighter.”

Key Ratings:

- **Stealth 70%** (tiny, silent, hard to notice)
- **Awareness 60%** (sees heat, motion, hidden seams)
- **Investigation 40%** (finds small details; doesn’t interpret well)
- **Fortitude 30%** (fragile; avoid direct harm)
- **Presence 45%** (eerie influence, unsettling stare)

Signature Traits:

- **Impossible Perch:** Can reach places a person cannot; can justify **Assist** on

Stealth/Awareness even when you lack line of sight.

- **Omen Flicker:** Once per scene, the Director may let the familiar's behavior hint at danger (telegraphing Clocks).
- **Salt-Sick:** In sanctified or salted areas, the familiar suffers **Disadvantage (–10 to –20)** on relevant actions.

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** “It’s trapped.” “Left corridor.” “Not that one.” (via flickers and taps)
- **Screen:** Rare—usually by distraction (fluttering at eyes, drawing a guard’s attention).
- **Anchor:** Holds a ritual circle stable in a small way; slows “Alarm” or “Suspicion” Clocks by misdirecting attention.

Personal Gear:

- Tiny charm-bell on a string (so you can intentionally “ring” it as a signal), a thimble-sized vial for carrying dust/powder samples, a scrap of black silk used as a “nest” inside your pouch.

MODERN Companions

Jordan “Jax” Mercer — Streetwise Partner

Archetype: Partner Agent / Investigator

Personality & Quirks: Wry humor, always chewing mint gum, keeps emotional distance until it matters. Has a habit of photographing everything “just in case.”

Role in the Duo: Scene awareness, negotiation backup, and “hold the line” competence during messy operations.

Key Ratings:

- **Firearms 50%** (controlled bursts, close-range competence)

- **Athletics 45%** (vaults, hauling, pursuit sprints)
- **Awareness 55%** (spots tails, reads crowds)
- **Investigation 60%** (patterns, timelines, inconsistencies)
- **Medicine 40%** (basic field stabilization)
- **Presence 45%** (calm, credible, can talk people down)

Signature Traits:

- **Procedural Mind:** Jax can **Anchor** a “Suspicion” or “Authorities Converging” Clock by producing plausible process (badges, timing, paperwork).
- **Undercover Face:** When Jax **Assists** social rolls, it often looks like a second voice confirming your story.
- **Never Unarmed (Within Reason):** Jax always has something useful—zip ties, flashlight, marker, tape—unless explicitly disarmed.

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** Calls angles, tracks time, backs your alibi, provides tools at speed.
- **Screen:** Draws one threat’s attention, covers an exit, suppresses an attacker’s line.
- **Anchor:** Holds perimeter, slows pursuit Clock by rerouting, prevents “Alarm” escalation once by quick action.

Personal Gear:

- Compact sidearm (or genre-appropriate), flashlight, multitool, phone with offline maps, small first-aid kit, zip ties, duct tape, disposable gloves, mini bodycam, spare ID wallet (fake/cover).
-

Evelyn “Ev” Cho — Calm Handler

Archetype: Handler / Logistics & Comms

Personality & Quirks: Gentle voice under pressure, writes everything down, hates improvisation but will do it for you. Drinks cold coffee like it’s a ritual.

Role in the Duo: Information flow, pacing control, and keeping scenes from spiraling out through Clocks and consequences.

Key Ratings:

- **Awareness 50%** (reads signals, monitors surroundings)
- **Intellect 60%** (planning, patterns, protocols)
- **Hacking 45%** (*if present*)
- **Presence 55%** (steady, de-escalating authority)
- **Driving 40%** (competent getaway, not a stunt driver)

Signature Traits:

- **Comms Anchor:** Ev is excellent at **Anchor** actions involving Clocks (pursuit, suspicion, security lockdown) through coordination.
- **Quiet Authority:** Ev can **Assist** Presence checks by reframing the conversation and lowering hostility.
- **Risk Ledger:** Once per scene, Ev can tell you the “most likely next consequence” (a Director-facing pacing tool framed as dialogue).

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** “Now.” “Not that door.” “Two left, one right.”
- **Screen:** Rare physically; usually screens by distraction, misdirection, or pulling one opponent’s attention via a callout.

- **Anchor:** Strong—prevents Clock advance once when it makes sense (reroute, stall, lie, call in a favor).

Personal Gear:

- Comms earpieces, power bank, compact laptop/tablet, small lock bypass kit (legal or not), laminated contact list, spare cash, folding baton or pepper spray (campaign tone), discreet camera pen.

FUTURISTIC / SCI-FI / SCIENCE-FANTASY Companions

K3R-0 (“Kero”) — Recon Drone

Archetype: Recon Drone / Sensor Buddy

Personality & Quirks: Cheerfully literal. Names everything it scans. Gets “excited” (rotor pitch rises) when it finds anomalies.

Role in the Duo: Sight beyond sight, mapping, early warning, and precision support.

Key Ratings:

- **Sensors 70%** (*Awareness-equivalent for scanning and detection*)
- **Stealth 55%** (quiet-hover mode, shadow-hugging)
- **Tech 60%** (*Intellect-equivalent for interface tasks*)
- **Defense 45%** (evasion routines; fragile)
- **Presence 20%** (not persuasive; it’s a drone)

Signature Traits:

- **Omni-Scan:** Kero can justify **Assist** on Awareness/Sensors in almost any environment unless the setting blocks scanning.
- **Soft Marker:** Once per round/beat, Kero can “paint” a target, enabling **Aim** flavor and supporting a clean **Assist**.

- **Signal Fragility:** In jamming, EMP threat, or interference zones, Kero often suffers **Disadvantage (–10 to –20)** on relevant actions.

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** Target marking, range calls, thermal silhouettes, route overlays.
- **Screen:** Screens by drawing fire briefly or confusing targeting—this usually advances a “Drone Integrity” or “Enemy Lock” Clock.
- **Anchor:** Holds a scan feed steady, prevents a “Security Lockdown” Clock advance once by spoofing a sensor burst.

Personal Gear / Built-Ins:

- Micro-camera array, thermal/low-light suite, short-range mapper, laser rangefinder, small cargo claw, encrypted uplink, emergency beacon (so you can find it if it’s forced down).

Lt. Sarah Vance — Co-Pilot with Too Many Stories

Archetype: Co-Pilot / Gunner / Spacer

Personality & Quirks: Swaggering, superstitious, tells “ship luck” stories at the worst times. Taps the bulkhead before hard maneuvers.

Role in the Duo: Vehicle and starship competence, tactical support, and a human anchor when the void gets weird.

Key Ratings:

- **Piloting 60%** (smooth evasions, controlled burns)
- **Gunnery 50%** (ship weapons, turret discipline)

- **Awareness 50%** (reads motion, threat vectors)
- **Tech 45%** (repairs in a pinch)
- **Presence 45%** (crew calm, hard talk, morale)

Signature Traits:

- **Seat-of-the-Pants:** When Sarah **Anchors**, it often prevents “Hull Breach,” “Overheat,” or “Pursuit” Clocks from advancing once through expert handling.
- **Gunner’s Rhythm:** Sarah can **Assist** ranged attacks by calling timing, lead, and windows.
- **Spacer’s Nerves:** Advantage on composure in vacuum/space panic moments is often justified in-fiction (apply as appropriate).

Universal Companion Actions:

- **Assist (+10):** Timing calls, vector warnings, damage control help, calm instruction.
- **Screen:** Draws one threat off you in dogfights or corridor fights (often by taking a risk).
- **Anchor:** Strong—stabilizes vehicles/ships, slows pursuit Clocks, holds a position while you act.

Personal Gear:

- Vacuum-rated jacket, mag-boots, compact sidearm or shock baton (tone), patch kit (sealant strips), basic medfoam canister, ship keycard/crew ident, lucky token (worn, real meaning).
-

One-on-One

Character Record Sheet

ONE-on-ONE RPG — PROTAGONIST RECORD			
Protagonist Name: _____		Pronouns: _____	
Player: _____		Director: _____	
Series/Campaign: _____		Session #: _____	
Genre/Module: _____		Date: _____	
CONCEPT (1 line): _____			
LOOK / VIBE (tags): _____			
DRIVE / GOAL: _____			
FEAR / STAKES: _____			
ATTRIBUTES (write rating/mod as your system uses)			
• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []
• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []
• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []	• _____ []
SECONDARY STATS / TRACKS			
Health / Harm: [] [] [] [] [] []		Armor/Guard: _____	
Stress/Strain: [] [] [] [] [] []		Defense/Evasion: _____	
Move/Speed: _____		Load/Carry: _____ Other: _____	
SKILLS (Skill — Linked Attribute — Rank/Bonus — Notes)			
1) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____			
2) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____			
3) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____			
4) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____			

| 5) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ |
| 6) _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ |
| _____ |

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| TRAITS / PERKS (short mechanical notes) |

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|
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| •
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|
|

| Advances / Growth: _____ |
| _____ |

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| CONSEQUENCES / CONDITIONS (severity + effect) |

| Minor: _____ Effect: _____ |

| Moderate: _____ Effect: _____ |

| Severe: _____ Effect: _____ |

| Conditions/Tags: _____ |
| _____ |

-----|
| CLOCKS (name — segments — filled) |

| Personal Clock 1: _____ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] |

| Personal Clock 2: _____ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] |

| Relationship Clock: _____ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] |

| Threat/Doom Clock: _____ [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] |
| _____ |

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| GEAR & RESOURCES |

| Readied (on you): _____ |
| _____ |

_____|
| Stash / Vehicle / Safehouse: _____ |
| _____ |

_____|
| Wealth/Credits/Supply: _____ Consumables/Charges: [] [] [] [] [] [] |

SIGNATURE ACTIONS / SPECIALS (2-5 lines)	
1)	
2)	
3)	
Costs/Limits (stress spend, ammo, cooldown clocks, etc.):	
BONDS & KEY NPCs (name — role — bond/tag — notes)	
1)	/ / /
2)	/ / /
3)	/ / /
Companion Link:	Bond:
SESSION NOTES / RECAP	

COMPANION (One-on-One RPG)

Name: _____ Role: _____ Tier: _____

Linked Protagonist: _____ Bond Tag: _____

Why they stay: _____

KEY STATS (rating/mod)	TRACKS (circle/check)
_____ []	Health: 1 2 3 4 5
_____ []	Stress/Loyalty: 1 2 3 4 5
_____ []	Other: _____

CORE COMPETENCIES (name / bonus / use)

1) _____ / _____ / _____

2) _____ / _____ / _____

3) _____ / _____ / _____

TRAITS (2-3) FLAW

• _____

• _____

ASSIST MENU (check)

| ☐ Set Up ☐ Cover/Guard ☐ Expertise ☐ Scout ☐ Push/Rally |

| Cost/Note:

_____ |

| SIGNATURE ITEM / GEAR CLOCKS (8-seg defaults) |

| Signature: _____ Arc: _____ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ |

| Gear: _____ Injury: _____ ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ |
